INSIDE THE ENEMY CAMP



शत्रूच्या शिबिरांत, लंडन १९०९

(SAVARKAR IN LONDON)
1906-1910

Preface

Vinayak Damodar SAVARKAR, popularly known as Veer Savarkar was the unsung hero of the Indian freedom struggle against the British rule (1906-47). He made an outstanding contribution to this great cause. Leaders like Gandhi, Nehru and Bose adopted Savarkar's main philosophies, but many years later. At the time of the Indian independence in 1947, many prominent leaders of the Congress Party, including its President, were members of Savarkar's secret revolutionary society, called The Abhinav Bharat. He was the main source of their inspiration and, yet, was never given any credit for this.

Savarkar suffered terribly for 27 years at the hands of the English rulers. He spent 10 ½ years of hard labour in jail, in Andaman Islands, 1,000 miles off east coast of India, followed by further 3 years in various jails in India and then 13 ½ years in internment there as well. Despite having suffered this appalling persecution by the British rulers, Savarkar had the greatness to proclaim, " I never hated the English, just because they were English." He sincerely believed in the universal brotherhood of man.

In prison, Savarkar also faced religious fanaticism from Muslims. Although he was in a helpless condition, he fought against their tyranny and defeated them and in the end won their respect. Yet he said in 1927, " I never hated Muslims nor even despised them." He was truly a Humanist.

During his internment of 13 ½ years, Savarkar was forced to live in a remote place called Ratnagiri and could move within the district but was forbidden to take part in politics. Undaunted by this, he concentrated on the task of social reforms and had to fight against the entrenched attitudes of orthodox people. By 1933, with his sheer resourcefulness he had managed to achieve four incredible social changes in Ratnagiri.

* Removal of the practice of untouchability.
* Dining together by Hindus of ALL castes, including untouchables.
* Opening up of a new temple for ALL Hindus including untouchables.
* Running of a Café open to ALL Hindus including untouchables.

After his release from the internment in 1937, Savarkar fearlessly opposed Gandhi's policy of perpetual capitulation to Muslim demands, as it was clearly proving to be disastrous to the nation. For this reason, Savarkar was much misunderstood and maligned, which unfortunately continues to be the case even today. But unlike many public figures of his times, he did not abandon his principles to suit the public mood.

There are five main phases of his life -

> Childhood and youth (1883-1906)
> In London (1906-1910)
> In prison on the Andaman Islands and in India (1911-1924)
> In internment in Ratnagiri (1924 – 1937)

> After release from internment (1937 –1966)
Savarkar started to write his Autobiography in the 1930s, but British Administrators forbade such writing. He therefore started to write it after the Indian independence in 1947. First part, dealing with his childhood and reviewing the political situation in India from 1857 to 1906, was published in Marathi in 1952.

The second part of the autobiography dealing with his work in London (1906-10) was published in Marathi in 1965. It gives me great pleasure in translating that part in English for the benefit of wider reading public. This book should be read in conjunction with another book '*Newsletters from London sent by Savarkar'*.

Savarkar shows us how the Indian freedom struggle moved through the following phases.
(1) Prayers, petitions and deputations of the Moderates
(2) Swadeshi or sponsoring of indigenous Indian industries and boycott of British goods, by the Militants.
(3) Home Rule movement of Shyamji Krishnavarma
(4) Armed revolution of Savarkar.

Savarkar reviews movements of other leaders and tells us how he changed the minds of Indian youth and also of the elder Indians in London. I quote two well-known examples:-

* Mr C D Deshmukh stood first in the ICS examination in 1919. But he was not sure whether he should join the Civil Service or join the Indian freedom struggle. He sought advise of Tilak (father of the Indian unrest), who was in London at that time. He told Deshmukh, " Everyone is not cut out for politics. After independence, we will require capable and experienced administrators. So, do join in the Indian Civil Service."
Deshmukh became Finance Minister in Nehru's cabinet in 1952.

* Subhashchandra Bose stood 4th in the ICS examination in 1920. He expressed his anguish; " I have been getting heaps of congratulations on my standing fourth in the competitive examination. But I cannot say that I am delighted at the prospect of entering the ranks of the ICS. If I have to join this service I shall do so with as much reluctance as I started my study for the ICS examination with. A nice fat income with a good pension in afterlife (i.e. in retirement) – I shall surely get. ….. But after all is service to be the be-all and end-all of my life? The Civil Service can bring one all kinds of worldly comfort but are not these acquisitions made at the expense of one's soul? " (*Netaji : Collected Works*, page 208)
Eventually Bose decided NOT to join the ICS, but to take part in India's freedom struggle.

This change in mental attitude was the result of Savarkar's work in London.

[Note - In June 1940, after the Dunkirk episode, Bose called on Savarkar in Bombay and on his advice, he slipped out of India, first to Germany and then to Japan. Bose formed the Indian National Army out of Prisoners of War held by the Japanese. Unfortunately Japan surrendered after Atom bombs were dropped on its cities by the U.S in August 1945 and eight days later Bose himself died in a plane crash. But it became clear to the British rulers that the loyalty of the Indian Army could no longer be taken for granted. They had no choice but to leave India.]

Savarkar gives glimpse of how; numerous unknown individuals had helped in his armed revolutionary movement. One should remember that his scholarship was not sufficient even to cover cost of boarding and lodging in England, let alone for other expenses. He had to seek help from his father-in-law, to make ends meet.

It would be appropriate to describe here with Savarkar's life in London in more detail.

Why did Savarkar come to London?

He says that he came to London

* To observe at first hand, the strengths of the British people, that enabled them to rule over India and also to note their weaknesses and to think of ways of overcoming their strengths and taking advantages of their weaknesses to achieve India's freedom.
* To meet students from all parts of India. Such meetings were much more easier in London than in India. People back home looked to these men with admiration and expected direction and leadership from them. According to report 'Indian Students in U.K.' compiled by Secretary of State for India in 1907 there were some 700 of them in U.K at that time (more than half of this number were in London).
* To kindle the spirit of fighting among these youth for achieving Indian independence.
* To meet professionals, Rajahs, merchants and rich people, who came to London and also possibly, visited Europe. Savarkar sought their assistance too in the freedom struggle.
* To establish contacts with revolutionaries of other countries like Russia, China, Ireland, Turkey, Egypt and Iran. He wanted to learn the art of making bombs from them, and put that knowledge and friendship into use for concerted attempts to overthrow the British rule. He also wanted to smuggle pistols and ammunition into India.

We should make note of the changes that revolutionaries of other countries had brought about in their respective countries.

> In Iran, a nationalist movement became active in December 1905. In August 1906, the Shah, Muzaffer-ud-Din, admitting the need for reforms, granted a Constitution and established a National Assembly (Majlis). In 1907 Shah Muzaffar died to be succeeded by the despotic Shah Mohammad Ali Shah. He tried to reverse the liberal policies of his predecessor, but violence erupted, with Russia backing the Shah and Britain on the side of the constitutionalists, who wanted the Majlis to survive. The constitutionalists won the day.

> In 1911/12, Chinese overthrew their monarchy and China became a Republic under Sun Yatsen.
> Bolshevik revolution took place in Russia in October 1917.
> Turks overthrew their Sultan and Turkey became a republic in 1923 with Kemal Pasha (Atta Turk) as its first President.
> In Ireland, the Easter uprising in 1916 failed but Irish Free State was granted in 1921.

The speed with which Savarkar's activities took place in London was breathtaking.

(i) He started regular 'Sunday meetings' to discuss various topics related to India's future. It soon became popular among Indian students. Revolutionaries from other countries such as Egypt, Ireland, Russia, China and Turkey including Lenin used to attend. One of the topics of discussion was "Future constitution of India."
These meetings were intended to increase knowledge of all current affairs of the participants. Savarkar was able to maintain this tradition even in jail later on the Andaman Islands during 1911-1921.

(ii) Savarkar organised the days of the remembrance of our illustrious forefathers like Shivajayanti – birthday of Shivaji and celebrations of our festivals like Divali (festival of lights) and Dasara. He wanted the revival of our culture, our values, our concepts, and our traditions. And above all, he wanted to instil the spirit of self-respect in the Indian people.

(iii) Abhinav Bharat -
* Savarkar started his secret revolutionary society the *Abhinav Bharat* (similar to Young Italy of Mazzini) in India in 1905. Oath taken by members of the *Abhinav Bharat* has been preserved by the British Secret Police. The words " *Absolute Political Independence* " mentioned in it are significant.
At the time of Indian independence in August 1947, many leaders of the Congress Party were members of this secret society. They included, Balasaheb Kher, Chief Minister of Bombay Province, Ravishankar Shukla, Chief Minister of Central Province, Sikandar Hiyat Khan, the Muslim Chief Minister of Punjab just to name a few. President of the Congress Party Acharya J B Kripalani himself was a member of Abhinav Bharat.

ASPECTS OF SAVARKAR'S WORK IN LONDON (1906 – 1910)

1. Literature

(a) Biography of Mazzini.
Savarkar was very much impressed by Maqzzini who led the freedom struggle of Italians against the Austrians in the 19th century. As he studied Mazzini's

autobiography and his thoughts, he was surprised that he himself was advocating the same tactics as Mazzini. His confidence increased tremendously. Savarkar wanted to emphasise to his readers that freedom from the British Rule would not be won easily. It would involve tremendous sacrifices over several decades, and that Indian freedom fighters would have to face many moments of utter despair. In such times he pointed to Mazzini’s struggle for inspiration.

Savarkar wrote in Marathi a biography of Mazzini. Two thousand copies of the first edition were quickly sold in 1907. When the second edition was due to be printed, the British administration in India declared the book as seditious and banned it.

(b) Indian War of Independence 1857.
In 1857, there was a massive uprising in India against the rule of the (English) East India Company, which managed to suppress it. But, that uprising (war) always inspired Savarkar and his followers.

After extensive search in the India Office Library, Savarkar wrote the history of ‘The forgotten 1857 Indian war’. It may sound strange but contemporary English authors DID NOT dub it as the Sepoy Mutiny. They invariably call it **The Indian Mutiny** accepting the fact that the whole of India wanted to get rid of their rule. If they use the word sepoy (soldier) at all, they call it *The Great Sepoy War.*

Savarkar wrote above book in Marathi. It was translated into English by his friends and secretly published in Holland in 1909. The Government of India promptly banned it on 23 July 1909. The book was a great source of inspiration to Indian revolutionaries for the next 38 years, including Bose, mentioned above.

* Copies of the book were available from Madam Cama at 25 Rue de Ponthieu, Champs Elysees, Paris. Price 10 Shillings.
* Copies were also available from F.H Publication, 749 Third Avenue, New York. Price clothed $2, paper edition$1.50.

(c) History of Sikhs
Sikhs are an important part of the Hindu society. In the Indian Army their percentage was quite high. Savarkar therefore learned Gurumukhi and studied their holy books - Adigranth, Panthprakash and Vichitra Natak. He prepared notes for his book 'History of the Sikhs' which he completed while in Paris. Unfortunately the manuscript was lost by his friend for fear of being arrested by the Police.

(d) Newsletters
During the period from 17 August 1906 to 26 November 1909, Savarkar sent 43 newsletters to Marathi newspapers explaining the strengths and weaknesses of the British people. These were also related to politics and current affairs.

(e) Leaflets
Three leaflets were printed in India House.
(i) ‘ Choose’, Oh Indian Princes
This was sent out to Indian Princes, Rajas and Maharajas, after Dhingra’s martyrdom in August 1909. Savarkar appealed to them to join in the freedom struggle. He appealed to them for their help in the freedom struggle. He said, " The Indian Freedom Struggle has started. It will go on until India is free from the British Rule."
His salient points were: -
-> If you co-operate, there could be room for various types of administrations in future India. Look at Germany. All the princes accepted Kaiser William of Prussia as their Emperor in 1871. The princely states remained but Germany became one nation.
-> India is your motherland too. You are slaves of the British, just like us.
-> Side with us, and one of you will become Maharaja of the whole of India. If not, at least remain neutral. If you do not co-operate, even your names will not be remembered by the future generations.
[This leaflet was mentioned in *The Times* (of London) on 22 August 1910]

(ii) *A leaflet in Gurumukhi*
This appealed to the Sikh soldiers to rebel against the British.

(iii) 'Oh Martyrs!'
This was addressed to the fighters of the 1857 war. Savarkar assured them ' Your blood oh martyrs, shall be avenged. We will continue your fight and drive the British out of India.

(f) Bomb manual
* Copies of bomb manual were printed in India House. One copy did reach Tilak in Pune.

2. India on the International Scene
In August 1907, the International Socialist Conference was held in Stuttgart in Germany. Savarkar sent Madam Cama as India's representative. It is here that the First Indian National Flag was unfurled. It had 8 lotuses to represent eight major provinces of India, Sun and Moon to show the eternity of India and the famous words ‘ Vande Mataram.’

3. Homage to the martyrs of the 1857 war
Savarkar organised a function in May 1908 to pay homage to the Indian martyrs of the 1857 war of Independence against the rule of the East India Company. His friends and the participants vowed to carry on their struggle till India became free.

4. The Fire Spreads

Influenced by Savarkar's work, there arose a succession of revolutionaries. The list extends from Khudiram Bose (1908) to Udham Singh (1940)

5. Trials and Tribulations

Despite having completed his studies, Savarkar was not called to the bar in May 1909 by the Benchers of Grays Inn.

He was arrested in London in July 1910, sent to Mumbai (Bombay) to stand trial for sedition and attempting to overthrow the British Raj. When the ship carrying him was anchored at the French port of Marseilles, Savarkar made a dramatic attempt to escape by jumping through a porthole and swimming ashore. Though Savarkar was on the French soil, British police inspectors who pursued him, arrested him and took him to back to the ship, without obtaining permission from the French authorities. This was in flagrant violation of the International Law, an insult to France. But, because Britain was the world power, the British authorities thought that they would get away with this. Supporters of Savarkar raised this issue in the French newspapers.

Eventually the episode resulted in the hearing at The International Court of Justice in Hague in January 1911. It gave its verdict on 14 February 1911. Though Savarkar was not returned to France, the case created a great sensation throughout Europe. Europeans became aware of the fact that the Indians wanted to overthrow the British rule.

When Savarkar was brought in front of the Special Judge in Bombay, he stated, " My case is due to be heard before the International Court of Justice in The Hague. The proceedings in India should therefore be postponed till the International Court gives its verdict." This request was refused, as the British rulers were most anxious to send Savarkar to jail.

Charges against Savarkar were – waging war against King Emperor and conspiracy to wage war against King Emperor. He was sentenced to Transportation for Life twice to be served in succession, a sentence unprecedented in the history of the British Empire.

His experiences of this sentence can be read in his book *My Transportation for Life*

A request for the reader

It is expected that the readers have elementary knowledge of Indian politics during the period 1857-1906. If not, they should refer to Appendix C for explanations of various terms and details of personalities.

During the last one hundred years words have acquired different meanings. This should be borne in mind when reading this book. The word ‘Militant’ used for some Indian leaders in 1905 has a different meaning today.

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* SSV means Samagra Savarkar Vangamaya (Complete works of Savarkar) Volume I (Autobiography part I), part 4 – *Shatruchya Shibirat*

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Chapter one

On board the ship *s.s. Persia*.

On 9 June 1906, I boarded the ship *s.s Persia* at Bombay to travel to London. Very soon, the ship left the shores of India. My friends and relations had gathered to see me off. I could no longer see them. I said to myself, "How sorry I am to say good bye to them. Is it possible that I will return to India in three years time and meet them again?" The ship gathered speed. The seashore could not be recognised any more. I was still looking at the direction of the shore. But the other passengers, who had also seen off their relatives, had already moved on and were busy finding their rooms and arranging their bags. Most of them were Europeans or Anglo-Indians. Some were returning to England with their families. All of them seem to be used to sea travel.

There were some who were travelling for the first time, but they were with their friends. They were happy and were laughing. But for me it was my first travel over such a long distance and I had no friends with me. In those days very few Hindus travelled abroad and Europeans looked down on Indians as 'Natives'.
I could feel this contempt in their eyes. It was the first time; I faced a crowd of Europeans alone.

I soon realised that I must find where my room was, but whom should I ask? All the staff, white and black were busy in looking after the European passengers. No one was bothered about me. Eventually I found courage to approach a European officer. I showed him my ticket and asked how I should find my cabin. Luckily he was employed by my travel agents, Thomas Cook and Sons. It was his job to deal with such requests. He realised that I was travelling for the first time. He said, "Here is my assistant. He will help you." The assistant was from Goa and he took me to my cabin. As I entered the cabin, I saw a young Sikh, some three years younger than me, who was busy arranging his bags. He was smart, with fair complexion and wearing a turban. He asked me, "Are you Mr Savarkar?" I said Yes and he was delighted. He said, "I was waiting for you. There are places for two passengers in this cabin. This is mine that that one is yours. I am so delighted that my companion is Indian. But the time was passing by and I wondered if you had changed your mind. I am travelling for the first time by sea. There are two or three Punjabis, but they have their cabins further down. I am so delighted that you are Mr Savarkar."

When faced with staying away from our kith and kin in a foreign land, one feels isolated and sad. However, when we meet a fellow countryman, how delightful the meeting becomes. I said to the Sikh youth, "I am also delighted to make acquaintance with you. What is your name?"
He said, "Harnamsingh."

Over the next two to three days we met those Punjabis mentioned by Harnamsingh. There were also a few more Indians and soon we formed a small group of about ten. Rameshchandra Dutta, well-known retired ICS officer was also travelling in the same ship, but in First class. The readers are going to come across the name of Harnamsingh hereafter. I therefore give some details about him.

Harnamsingh was born in a respected Sikh family near Amritsar. He lost his father at young age. His mother loved him dearly and got him married by the age of eighteen. He soon passed his B A examination. Maharaja of Nabha state was impressed by Harnamsingh and decided to send him to England to become a Barrister. He offered him suitable scholarship for the studies. In those days, there were hardly any Sikh Barristers. Many Sikhs felt that Harnamsingh would not only become rich but also become a boon for the Sikh society. They therefore heartily supported the idea of Harnamsingh going to England. But his mother? She had no other children. She was worried stiff – my boy is going to stay in England for three or four years, how will he manage? How can I stay without him for so long? She said, “ You become a lawyer here. We are not short of money, even if you do not work. What is the need for going overseas?” Moreover, most people considered going overseas as objectionable, a dangerous adventure. In the end, a few respected men suggested that Harnamsingh should come home once a year and his scholarship should be increased accordingly. The mother agreed grudgingly. We will see later what happened in reality.

Among my fellow travellers I must mention one person in particular (later on Savarkar called him Mr Etiquette). He was a rich youth from Punjab, aged about thirty. He had travelled to Europe many times. He, like many others, had adopted western way of life and as a result, people like him felt that they were equal to foreign rulers. So, even at home he behaved as if he was an Englishman. Maharaja Shinde of Gwalior has named his son as George. In Bengal and Madras, people styled their surnames to sound like English ones like Ray. Thus, for example, Chattopadhya became Chatterjee, Bandopadhya became Banerjee. Fathers were called Papa, Mothers became Mummy. Though this person on our ship had not been anglicised to that extent, he felt that unless our people and especially students adopt European customs and manners in dress, having lunches and dinners, even going to the extent of smoking a pipe and drinking; we would not be considered as equal to Europeans. He and many of his age sincerely felt the same. Many Indian students who had gone to England for the first time were also of the same opinion.

Experiences of previous travellers

Late Mr. Surendranath Banerjee had described in his biography, how difficult it was to go to England in his younger days and what was the mental attitude of those who dared to go to England. He wrote –

" As I have observed I started for England on March 3rd 1868. Romesh Chandra Dutt and Beharilal Gupta were with me. We were all young in our teens and visit to England in those days was a more serious affair than it is now. It did not only mean absence from home but the grim prospect of social ostracism. We all three had to make arrangements in secret, as if we were engaged in some nefarious plot of which the world should know nothing. My father was helping me everyway but the fact had to be carefully concealed from my mother and when at last on the eve of my departure the news had to be broken to her she fainted away under the shock of what to her was terrible news". (p10)

"A visit to England, however, was a new form of heterodoxy to which our country had not yet become accustomed. The anglicised habits of some of those who had come back from England added to the general alarm". (p26)

"Some of our best men had fallen victims to the curse of drink. It was considered to be an inseparable part of English culture. A man who did not drink was hardly entitled to be called educated. The saintly Raj Narayan tells us how he himself meeting other friends called for a drink and how they were found all lying on the floor in a state of more or less inebriety." (page7).

What happened after Banerjee returned from England?
Banerjee says, "Although I was taken back into the old home by the members of my family, the whole attitude of Hindu Society, of the rank and file, was one of unqualified disapproval. My family was practically outcasted. We were among the highest of Brahmins, but those who used to eat and drink with us on ceremonial occasions stopped all social contacts and refused to invite us." (page 26).

Mr Surendranath also mentions how majority of "England Returned" leading gentlemen took to the European style of eating and drinking at home and some of them went to the length of throwing the leftovers of their meals, bones and flesh and all over their wall into the compounds of their orthodox neighbours just to spite their religious feelings."
[Note – Suez Canal was opened only in 1869. Surendranath Banerjee had to travel to London via Cape of Good Hope at the southern tip of South Africa, a journey of some 8,000 miles!!]
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We need to change when we go abroad

Now let us return to my voyage to England.
Apart from the misconceptions in the mind of my friend on the ship (who advocated adopting English customs), there was some truth in it. I always maintained that when we need to stay in a foreign country like England for a number of years, we need to adopt the customs, manners and daily routine of the host country, as long as these do not involve any humiliation on our part. The reason being that we go to foreign countries for specific purpose, which is best

served by adapting to changed circumstances. Moreover, we can compare their traditions with those of ours and decide if we need to make any changes for our benefit.
Though these were my opinions, my departure to England was so sudden that I could, not only, not get accustomed to eating habits of the English but also did not have time to get sufficient clothes made for my stay in England. In India I had no idea of how to dress like an Englishman (collar, trouser, suit, boot etc). I did not even have any curiosity. In the eyes of my friend on the ship (later called Mr Etiquette), I was totally unsuitable for independence. Well, in the end I surrendered to him and learned from him how to dress like a European. It was much more difficult to learn how to eat with fork and spoons. At times, the situation became dangerous. I had no qualms about meat eating but I was always a vegetarian. But on the ship most of the dishes were non-vegetarian. My friend had warned me – knife in right hand, fork in the left. When meat pieces are cut they are to be put in the mouth with the fork. But while observing how others eat, I forgot the lesson and like Hindu custom put forward the right hand in my mouth. It had my knife and my lips started to bleed. I bent down and held handkerchief to my mouth and got up so that others would think that I had become seasick. Eating fish was just as difficult. I did not know where the bones were and how to separate them from the flesh. This led to some embarrassing incidents. I cut a fish and put the piece in my mouth and started to chew. All of a sudden I hit the bones. I had no option but to throw it away. I was very embarrassed and decided not to eat fish, but then, what was I supposed to eat? Other vegetarian friends were also in the same situation. Ultimately we sought help form our experienced friend. He ordered some cooked fish to our room and demonstrated how to cut open a fish, where the bones are located etc and how to eat fish. He also told us that there was a special knife to cut fish.

I sincerely thanked our experienced friend. I had nicknamed him Mr Etiquette and will refer to him by that name. Later, he changed his views and joined our secret society –*The Abhinav Bharat*, but on the condition that his name should never be mentioned. Today (i.e. 1965) I do not know where he is or even if he is alive.

Harnamsingh

Harnamsingh was a Sikh, a Keshadhari, which means that he would not cut his hairs and had to tie them above the head like ancient sages. It was therefore impossible for him to wear a cap of any kind. He had to wear a turban. Even though he wore a collar, necktie etc like a European he wore turban also. In those days (i.e. by 1906) very few Sikhs had travelled abroad, therefore he presented a sight of some clumsiness, or an eccentric. Therefore, to the Europeans, especially to their women and children, a man with a turban was a sight of fun. It used to make them laugh.

At times, our group of Indian youth used to go on the deck to enjoy fresh air. Harnamsingh, who shared a cabin with me also used to join us. Europeans pointed at his turban and laughed. At first, we ignored them. But one day their children pointed to the turban and said, ‘ what a funny hat ’ and came very close to him. Their parents, instead of controlling the children, also began to laugh. Harnamsingh moved on, Mr Etiquette pushed a white boy aside. As a result, the rest of the children went away and their parents too did not make a fuss. But after we returned to our cabin, Mr Etiquette said to me, ‘ Savarkar, tell Harnamsingh not to wear the turban. Why should we dress that makes the Europeans laugh at us and ridicule our behaviour? Though they laughed at Harnamsingh, I felt that it was an insult to all of us. In future, if he insists on wearing the turban, I will not go on the deck.’

I reacted, “ My friend, I will never tell Harnamsingh to abandon the turban. Some of our customs are out of date and harmful. I am ahead of all of you in proposing their abandonment. I am far more reformist when it comes to that. However, it is sheer cowardice to abandon certain customs merely because the Europeans laugh at them. Apart from convenience, if we look at it aesthetically, our turbans are far more appealing and colourful than the European hats, which look like dustbins. We should use hats when they are suitable for the occasion. Moreover, wearing a turban is essential to the Sikh way of life. To stop wearing it, simply because Europeans laugh at it, is a national insult to us. I say, ‘ Why don’t WE ALL wear turbans and go on the deck for a walk. When Europeans see that we are all united, their ridicule will subside.”
Mr Etiquette sprung up and said, “ You said the right thing. From tomorrow, I too will wear a turban and accompany Harnamsingh.” Thus I had been successful in kindling his self-respect.

I used to argue in many ways with Indian youth, who were suffering from inferiority complex and try to teach them self-respect. I led this course of action to change their outlook, to make them aware of current politics and to induce them to join the Indian freedom struggle. In short, I used to say, “ Today, the English are ruling over us. We therefore have to learn their habits in detail. And while doing that, if we make mistakes, we feel so shy and guilty. I also used to feel the same way. But that is wrong. When we were masters in our land and Europeans came to our land for trade, they too had to learn our customs and manners, they too made silly mistakes and our forefathers too laughed at them in those days.”

“ Today, in the streets of London, Indians are teased as blackies. But we must remember that when the English came to Pune in the days of Maratha Peshwas, in the 18th and 19th century they too were called, ‘Red faced’ (topiwale ingraj). The English could not walk without shoes. But in our courts they had to remove their shoes and walk barefoot. They must have felt very awkward indeed. They were also not used to sitting on the floor, as it was not done in England due to cold climate there. But they had to sit cross-legged in our courts and must have

felt very uncomfortable in sitting that way. No doubt, our forefathers must have laughed at them too. That is natural human reaction.”

“ There are interesting stories of experiences of the English in the 18th century. A Maratha Sardar (Knight) invited an officer of the East India Company for dinner. But the seating arrangement was in Indian style, i.e. no tables or chairs, no knifes and forks. With great difficulty, the English officer sat down. He was not sure which item of food, he should start with. So, he picked up *karanjee,* which looked like a cake. It had desiccated coconut inside. He was surprised and said, “ How come coconut pieces went inside? ” There was a great laughter among the participants.”

“ Such events happen all the time, when people of two different cultures meet. However, there is nothing to be ashamed of them. It is all to be taken as simple fun.”

“ **But these English men and women do not laugh at us merely as a matter of fun. They laugh out of arrogance and to despise us. They thereby imply that they are ruling over us, and therefore all their customs and traditions are superior to ours. That lies behind their laughter.** ”

“ Our own people who believe that if we learn the manners and customs of the English, they will respect and consider us worthy of political reforms should think a little. Look at the thousands of Indian Christians. They have adopted the customs and manners of the English, including their religion. Of course they cannot change their colour. But have they been given any political rights? None whatsoever!! ”

“ Consider the Irish. They do not even have problem of colour (they are white like English). Why are they not granted the Home Rule in their affairs? Why are the English ruling over them with fixed bayonets? So, my friends, adoption of customs and manners of the English is not the criterion for the political advancement. ”

“ Now look at the Japanese. They inflicted a smashing defeat on the Russian Navy in 1904/05. And immediately these flat nosed, short fellows became worthy of friendship of the English. Customs and manners are of secondary or even of tertiary importance!! ”

On board the ship *‘s.s. Persia’*, I met some young Indian students. No matter what the topic of discussion with them was, I always tried to connect it to the Indian freedom struggle, as can be seen from the above example. Thus, the youth were awakening to the Indian politics and so political debates began to take place. At first, most of them were either uninformed or were not interested in the subject. Some even said that it was one of the conditions for their scholarships that they must not take part in any political movement

I used to say:- ‘ Fair enough. You cannot take part in political movements, but that does not prevent you from taking part in political discussions. So, why not join in?’ How such small beginnings eventually led them to join in the freedom struggle is explained later.”

I changed the mind of Harnamsingh

Those who travel a long distance across the seas have to face two reasons for sorrow from day one. First is seasickness and the second is homesickness. Seasickness makes one vomit often. Luckily, even though it was my first sea travel, I did not suffer from seasickness. But homesickness was severe. I lost my parents at young age, and having experienced the horrors of bubonic plague, we three brothers and my elder brother’s wife were very close. Even otherwise I used to feel affinity to any friends or relations. I used to feel restless at the loss of their company. However, now I had to do my duty and to control my sorrow. I had to hold back my sorrow and tears. That was harsh but without it, my aim would not have been achieved. I had to pay the price. Other Indians suffered from seasickness. They could not take food for three or four days, but they did not suffer from homesickness. They had dreams of becoming Barristers and later making money or joining the ICS and enjoying high authority. They were therefore smiling. The only exception was that of Harnamsingh.

Harnam soon became seasick. He was bedridden and could not eat. I nursed him as much as I could. But he also became homesick. He wanted to go back to his family. He could not stand the separation and the thought of being away from home for so long worried him. Finally he said to me, ‘ Savarkar, you are the only close friend I have. You will laugh at me, but I cannot bear the pain of being away from my family. We are not short of money at home. I wish to see my relatives right now. It takes fifteen days even to hear from one’s relatives. How can I stay for so long in a foreign land? I do not want to become a Barrister. Once we reach Aden, I will purchase a return ticket and go back to India. In a way, I feel ashamed that I am so weak, so fickle, but .. ’

I interrupted and said, ‘ You love your family so much. You should not be ashamed of that. It is but natural that you should feel restless and homesick. However, if we love our kith and kin so much, should we not be prepared to suffer for the sake of the very same people? At times, one must suffer separation from one’s family for a higher aim in life. I feel just like you. I too wish to meet my family right now, but I am controlling my urges, for achieving higher things in life. We must resist such temptations. It is our very love of our people that should give us strength to survive through the period of separation.’

I then reminded Harnam of Guru Govind Singh (1666 -1708), the 10th and the last Guru of the Sikhs, who organised them into a fighting force and raised the sword to protect Hindus from the onslaught by the Mughals. His eldest son Ajit Singh aged 17 was killed in the battle of Chamkour. Then, his second son Juzar

Singh aged 13 went out in the battlefield. He too died fighting the Mughals. The next day, Guru Govind Singh escaped the siege with his family. However, he got separated from his remaining two sons who were captured by the Mughal Subedar of Sarhind on 27 December 1704. When they refused to embrace Islam, Jovar Singh aged 8 and Fateh Singh aged 5 were bricked up and left to die by the Mughals.
I continued, " Both of us revere Guru Govind Singh. Was that warrior a heartless person? Of course not. He was an ocean of affection. When he heard that Jovar Singh and Fateh Singh were bricked up and left to die, he exclaimed ' My great heroes! They died for the Hindu dharma.' Suppose, those youths had been tempted by love and had stayed away from the battlefield, or that Guru Govind Singh himself had embraced Islam out of fear, would we have considered them worthy of our respect? Guru Govind Singh's family may perhaps have lived longer but would have been despised the same way as many Hindu families had been despised because they embraced Islam for similar reasons. They would have never become immortals to Hindus."

" If we say that we are the disciples of Guru Govind Singh, then we must be prepared to suffer the separation from our beloveds for the betterment of our people, our nation, our religion. We must not budge even an inch. So, what should be our aim? Should it be to earn money by becoming a barrister or passing the Indian Civil Service (ICS) examination? Nay. Our aim must not be so low; it must be the freedom of India. We are going to England to work for that very reason and any other reasons must be secondary."

" Just like you, I also think that each time it would take at least a month to receive a reply from India to my letters. But my mind takes me back to the days of the East India Company. It used to take six months for their ships to travel from England to India via the Cape of Good Hope in South Africa and the same time for the return journey. And yet, Englishmen came to India on successive voyages. They fought with our forefathers and established their rule in India. If we want to defeat them, we must be prepared to suffer hundred times more than they did."

" There were times when our ancestors established huge colonies from Indochina to further east up to Mexico and up to Iraq in the west. They too travelled extensively on the high seas. However, after the Muslim invasions in Northern India there was a break in the seafaring adventures. But now we must dream of flying the Indian flag all over the world once again. This zeal will give us the courage to bear the individual sufferings."

" After listening to such discourse, Harnam Singh abandoned his plan to return to India from Aden. I changed his viewpoint completely. In the end he asked me, ' Tell me, what can I do for my motherland? "

[Note -

In 1908, Indian students used to wear badges honouring the heroes of the 1857 war against the rule of the British in India. There were skirmishes in England between Indian students and British authorities. Harnamsingh wore such a badge. But he refused to remove the badge. He also did not apologise for wearing the badge. He therefore had to leave the Agricultural College at Cirencester. British authorities put pressure on the Maharaja of Nabha and forced
him to withdraw the scholarship of Harnam. His Principal Mr John McClellan wrote to the India Office, 'It is a great pity that Harnam has not apologised and returned to the college for continuing his studies. He was about to be given a gold medal.'
This just shows how much Savarkar influenced and transformed Harnam Singh.]

Mazzini (1805-1872)

At that time, I had with me an English biography of Mazzini. I do not remember the author, but probably he was Bolton King. I gave it to some to read. I had deliberately underlined the passages relating to the underground organisation (Young Italy) of Mazzini and his programme of action. Four or five of them read it. But even today (i.e. 1965) they feel that their names should not be disclosed. So, let us call them Keshavanand and Mr Etiquette. I knew that they had been deeply impressed. During our discussion, I bluntly asked, " Is it not our duty to start an underground society on the lines of *Young Italy* for the liberation of our country? "

" Of course! That is the first thing to do." They said. " But what is the use of a few ordinary youngsters like us starting such an organisation? Persons like Lokamanya Tilak, Lala Lajpat Rai or Maharaja Sayajirao of Baroda should take a lead. When they do, we should join them. Until that happens we should wait."

" Few handful of youths? " I said, "When *Young Italy* was started, who started it? A few unknown youths!!. Mazzini had used the same words. He said ' when we started *'Young Italy'*, we were only a handful of unknown youngsters. But time came when our very name struck terror in the hearts of politicians.' I further said, " and how do you know that our well known leaders had not started any secret societies? You see, if a society is <u>secret</u>, will it broadcast its existence by advertising in newspapers? Suppose for the sake of argument that no Indian leader or Maharaja has so far come forward to start a movement for *Absolute Political Independence for India*. Is it not up to us to make a start? We need to do this precisely because no one is doing it."

" Suppose your mother is seriously ill and your brothers are reluctant to get help because of laziness or ignorance or fear. You know what medicine is needed. What would you do? Would you blame the brothers? Or would you do your duty? If you wish to know what a handful but determined young men can do, we have the example of Chaphekar brothers. "

“ I then narrated the story of Chaphekars. During the outbreak of Bubonic Plague of 1897 in Pune, The British Administration in Bombay Province resorted to harsh, oppressive measures. People were insulted and humiliated. Women were molested. When Chaphekar brothers saw that no one would punish the arrogant British officers, they shot and killed Collector Mr Rand. They went to the gallows for that, but taught a lesson to the British who realised that their barbarity would not go unpunished. Chaphekar’s deed inspired me. We can harm the British at least to the extent of our numbers, whether or not others follow us. But, in most cases, one spark ignites another spark and eventually a fire ensues.”

‘ Are you then prepared to take an oath (pledge) of such a secret organisation? ’ Keshavanand asked me. ” I said, “Of course.”

“Then I am too ready to take the oath,” said Keshavanand.

I looked at Mr Etiquette. He said, “I will let you know definitely tomorrow.” I said, “Take two days if needed. After all I want your full commitment.” That night Mr Etiquette called me to his room. He raised some questions. I answered them all. He said, ”in that case we must start the secret society right now, but what should we name it?”
I said, “*Abhinav Bharat*. Keshavanand has liked the name.”
“Very good.” He said and called Keshavanand also to his room. I showed him the oath in English and said, “Please read this carefully, but don’t get carried away by emotions. Our aims are noble but they also involve enormous sacrifices and hardships. You may decide not to join in, but if you do, you must carry the mission all your life.” He read it and agreed to take the oath.

“Very well then.” I rose and started to read the oath.

Keshavanand took the oath after me. Mr Etiquette followed. After testing them both for trustworthiness I told them, “You were saying earlier that we should join in a strong society once it is formed. I did not say much because I wanted to test your resolve and sincerity. But now you have taken the oath, you will be delighted to know that hundreds of youth have already taken this oath and are seeking to overthrow the British Raj. There are branches in towns and villages, schools and colleges; even government servants are our members. You agreed to the name *Abhinav Bharat*, that is precisely the name by which it has already been active. Now you too have become its sworn members.”

“On behalf of the society I am going to England to become a Barrister. That is true, but it is only an excuse. At present highly intelligent Indians go to England and try to reach positions of authority by passing examinations like ICS, IMS or Bar-at-Law. If we persuade some of these to our side, our propaganda will spread to India. Moreover, if a revolutionary act takes place in London, it draws attention of Englishmen far more than a thousand lectures in India. Such an act will draw attention of Europeans too. They will be aware of our demands.”

“Our leaders are tongue tied. The Moderates always emphasise their loyalty to the British. Even the militants say that they are loyal subjects. They do want the British Raj to continue. All that they want is reforms. This creates an impression in Europe and in America that Indians are happy to be ruled over by the British. **We on the other hand are going to proclaim in England and Europe that it is not the question of reforms here and there, we do not want British rule at all. We want to be independent.**”

“Thirdly, we have heard that, in Europe, some cheap but effective instruments like hand-bombs are easily available and their use can be learnt. This is impossible in India. Many such activities are only possible in England. We also want to establish contacts with enemies of England and with their help raise a banner of revolt in India to coincide with a war in Europe. At present it is only a dream, but many times such dreams become a reality.”

After such discussions I also tried to persuade some other Indians. I gave oath to one or two who sounded reliable.

A few words about the oath. I am purely writing from my memory. Such oaths were taken by hundreds of youth in many languages and the papers would have been destroyed for the sake of secrecy. But I still remember its contents, language and spirit behind the oath.

BANDE MATARAM

The Oath of The Abhinav Bharat

In the name of God,
In the name of Bharat Mata,
In the name of all the Martyrs that have shed their blood for Bharat Mata,
By the Love, innate in all men and women, that I bear to the land of my birth, wherein lie the sacred ashes of my forefathers, and which is the cradle of my children,
By the tears of Hindi Mothers for their children whom the Foreigner has enslaved, imprisoned, tortured, and killed,
I, …
Convinced that without Absolute Political Independence or Swarajya my country can never rise to the exalted position among the nations of the earth which is Her due,
And convinced also that that Swarajya can never be attained except by the waging of a bloody and relentless war against the Foreigner,
Solemnly and sincerely Swear that I shall from this moment do
everything in my power to fight for Independence and place
the Lotus Crown of Swaraj on the head of my Mother;
And with this object, I join the Abhinav Bharat, the revolutionary
Society of all Hindusthan, and swear that I shall ever be true and

faithful to this my solemn Oath, and that I shall obey the orders of
this body;
If I betray the whole or any part of this solemn Oath, or if I betray this body or any other body working with a similar object, May I be doomed to the fate of a perjurer!

As I said earlier, Keshavanand signed the oath as first member and later it lighted the spirit of freedom struggle in the hearts of many youth. They were knowledgeable, orators, freedom fighters and martyrs. Many, inspired by its Mantra, gave their lives for our freedom struggle.

Thus began our European branch of *Abhinav Bharat*. It soon became well known throughout Europe. It would have been seditious even to become a member of our organisation. I know how difficult it was to recruit members. What questions and objections I faced. I have given above examples as an illustration. It is impossible to state all the other cases. You can get an idea from the above.

Mr Etiquette

I will mention Keshavanad later, but now we must say good-bye to Mr Etiquette. At his own request, while I was in England, I did not entrust him with any political work. So his name did not appear in any news. But the work he did behind the scene was superb and worthy of a dedicated revolutionary. My work extended from publishing revolutionary literature and its distribution to buying of arms. Whatever funds I expected from Mr Etiquette he never said no or disappointed me. If any disturbance was expected at a public meeting he would arrange a group of ten to twenty men to protect me. So clever was the arrangement that anyone hardly noticed these men. He was well-known among Indian merchants and sent regularly to India large consignments of cloth and machinery. But he concealed my revolutionary literature and my books in them and even organised their distribution at ten to fifteen centres in Punjab. He got my articles translated into Gurumukhi and Punjabi and distributed among soldiers in Punjab. I wrote – 'You ask where are the arms? But my friends, the arms in your hands are yours. Why not use them?' Such leaflets were distributed among soldiers in various military camps. British administrators in India became aware of these leaflets and that caused uproar. Some sympathetic military officers warned us and we abandoned that route in time.

British rulers were kept in the dark and Mr Etiquette was not disturbed in any way. Throughout my stay in England he drew no attention of the Police in London. When I fell badly ill and moved to Paris for convalescence in 1910 January I heard that he had returned to India. On my return to London I was arrested and sent to India to face trial. There was lot of commotion due to my trial in Bombay and many men were arrested on suspicion of being associated with me, but Mr. Etiquette was not one of them. I did not hear his name even

afterwards. May be he remained safe, may be not. Whatever the case, once he took the oath of *Abhinav Bharat* he never faltered and performed his functions superbly. There were many others like him, who were known only to me. They were too many to mention due to shortage of space and even today I am not in a position to disclose their names. I am sincerely grateful to them all and take this opportunity to pay homage to them.

Tranquility at night time

My days on the ship were thus very busy with the work of enlightening our youth, but things changed at night. I would go to the deck to enjoy fresh air and sit alone for hours. It was the first time I was seeing the might of forces of nature. What a superb sight it was! At the bottom there was vast, endless sea and over the head was vast, endless sky. Our ship was crossing the sea. It looked like an adventure of a crocodile wandering on water. It was as if we were challenging the shining stars in the sky. But then I thought – what if the nature wishes differently? It can shatter the whole world with a big bang and even the human race may be wiped out. Still it is worth admiring the adventure of man in crossing the seas.

For a week or two I would be deeply engrossed in thoughts. What is the purpose of Creation? What is going to happen in future? Is it a game of hide and seek? The ocean contains many huge snakes and crocodiles. On the land also there are similar creatures. The stronger ones eat the weaker ones and each live in fear of some one more powerful. There are volcanoes, earthquakes, comets, snow storms – are we to say that this is a game of God? Or is this an act of the Devil? And how long is this game to go on? It seems that the whole world will vanish at the will of the creator, followed by regeneration of life and the human and animal activities all over again. The creator never gets tired. And where does Man fit in all this?

I would spend hours engrossed in such thoughts, recite all the philosophies that I had learned. I also composed some poems in those days.

Suez and Marseilles

Eventually our ship crossed the Red Sea and we entered the port of Suez. What I saw was wonderful. Many goods were being sold and bought. Asia, Europe and Africa meet here. It was a unique exhibition, a gathering of humans of all colours, shapes and sizes, Africans, Chinese, Japanese were all there. And under such circumstances a working language develops in which people conduct their transactions.

From Port Suez, we came to Marseilles in France. From here, we were going to take a train to London. I was particularly interested in Marseilles. It was from here

that the contingent of French Army travelled to Paris spreading the message of the great revolution of 1789. It was here that the famous French national anthem was composed by Rouget de L'Isle. The song called *Marseillaise* provided undeniable inspiration to the French during their battles against England, Prussia, Spain and Austria.

Marseilles had another attraction for me. My hero of Italian freedom struggle, Mazzini (1805-72), when deposed, came to Marseilles to seek refuge. He had no friends or acquaintances, no food, no shelter. Still he was undeterred and founded his secret society *Young Italy*. Later, Austrian authorities in Italy sentenced Mazzini to death in absentia, but it could not be carried out in France. So Mazzini stayed in Marseilles. Austrians put pressure on France and the French ordered Mazzini to leave France. He went underground and continued to stay in Marseilles. At a later day, he left Marseilles to take part in one of the uprisings in Italy. It was only then that he left Marseilles. Therefore the city was of great reverence to me.

I went to the city with a tourist guide. He showed me buildings of local importance, gardens, ancient remains etc. I asked him to show me the house where the great Italian freedom fighter once lived. He was perplexed and replied, "I know the city well, but I have never heard of Mazzini. I can make enquiries if you have any address."

I said to myself, 'after all, this man is merely making a living. How would he know the detailed history?' I suggested that he should contact a newspaper editor or a local teacher. Luckily, we came across the office of a newspaper. My guide went inside and made some enquiries. When he came out, he said – The editor says, 'we do not know the house where Mazzini of Italy once lived. Please make enquiries in Italy. Perhaps the Italians would know the place.'

I laughed and said to myself, " when Mazzini came to Marseilles some sixty or seventy years ago, hardly a single Frenchman knew him. Today hundreds of passengers from many nations are coming here. No one is bothered about me – an Indian revolutionary. Similarly, when a few Italian revolutionaries were once wandering the streets of this town the Frenchmen hardly bothered. When Mazzini founded his secret society here, the position and strength of that society was no different to our *Abhinav Bharat*. The French could not care less about the fate of Italy. Mazzini became famous only in later years and after he had left Marseilles. It was but natural that the French kept no record of stay or movements of Mazzini in Marseilles. In any case, Mazzini was a destitute. He had no fixed abode. How could my guide know where Mazzini lived?'

My guide took me through what I presume to be the old city. It bore striking resemblance to lanes of my hometown Nasik in India. It was surprising that both towns had streets of cobbles, firmly set in just as they were some two hundred years ago.

By the time I retuned from my guided tour, it was nearly time for the train to England. I, along with other Indians, sat in our compartments and as the train started to move, I saluted the great city of Marseilles.

No one would have imagined the turmoil that was to come in just four years time. Today, no Frenchman knows me here. And yet in four year's time many Frenchmen would ask – who is this man Savarkar? The issue of Indian freedom struggle would be discussed throughout Europe. And as a coincidence, the name of Marseilles will make headlines throughout the world at least for one year. No one had the slightest idea that this will happen.*

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* On 13 March 1910, Savarkar was arrested in London. The next day he was brought in front of Magistrate Sir A D Rutzen of Bow Street and charged under the Fugitive Offenders Act 1881. He was refused bail and later committed to High Court. Finally, the Court of Appeal decided on 17 June that Savarkar should be sent to India to stand for a trial.

Savarkar was being taken to Mumbai (Bombay) by ship to stand a trial for waging war against the King Emperor. When the ship *s s Morea* anchored off **Marseilles** in France on 8 July, Savarkar jumped through a porthole and swam ashore. Unfortunately, British police chased and caught him and with the complicity of the French policeman they took Savarkar back to the ship. His trial began in Mumbai in September 1910.

This however caused a sensation in Europe and resulted in the court case at the International Court of Justice at The Hague. The judgement was delivered on 14 February 1911. Though Savarkar was not handed back to France, this case was later referred to in international treaties, e.g. between Great Britain and the USA, and between France and Italy.

The names Marseiiles and Savarkar were in the headlines throughout the World for at least one year.

Chapter two

When I reached London.

After leaving Marseilles, I did not stop to visit famous places like Paris and headed straight for London*. I left Bombay on 9 June 1906 and reached London on 2 or 3 July 1906. At the railway station, some representatives of Shyamji Krishnavarma's India House had gathered. Harnamsingh, for the sake of my company, changed his plan and came to India House with me. Other Indians went to their relevant destinations as planned.

When I arrived at India House, I did not know anybody there. When we go to foreign countries like England we have to change our habits of daily life – from answering call of nature, bathing, dining and dressing, to language and etiquettes. Many are not only different but also contrary to ours and we are reluctant or embarrassed to adopt them. If we stay in the house of Englishmen, we are treated as idiots. Luckily I did not have to stay in the house of an English family or an English boarding house. Residents in *India House* were fully sympathetic and friendly. I soon got acquainted with them and also with Indians living in surrounding areas. Within a week, I started my political propaganda.

In my mind I already had the outline of my propaganda. In Maharashtra, our local revolutionary organisations like 'Rashtra Samuha', 'Mitramela' were all amalgamated into one association *Abhinav Bharat*. The name encompassed them all and facilitated its spread all over India. My going to London made this spread very easy. That was one of the reasons of my going to London. There, people from all provinces, businessmen and merchants, Rajas and Maharajas and a selected few hundred students, could meet. It was possible to arrange such meetings far more conveniently and with ease than was possible in India.

In a foreign country, we feel lonely and isolated. If we see a fellow countryman we suddenly feel attracted to each other. This soon develops into friendship, which crosses barriers of caste, province and status. In London, if some one organises a tea party, people of all Indian provinces, grades and prestige can participate. Back home, one would have to arrange an all India conference costing hundreds of rupees. Such gatherings were much more easier in London. Accordingly I started my meetings and spread my message of *Abhinav Bharat*.

However, it is appropriate to review the activities of Indians in London that took place before my arrival. We need to know what their objectives and programmes were, what was the strength of the British Empire and attitude of British people towards India. This evaluation will also illustrate my starting point.

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* Note – Savarkar travelled by train from Marseilles to Paris and then Calais, crossed the English Channel by boat, arrived at Dover and then travelled by Train again to London (Charing Cross) or London (Victoria).

Dadabhai Naoroji – the grand old man of Indian politics. (1825 –1917)

The honour for an organised and consistent political activities, after the 1857 war, undoubtedly goes to Dadabhai Naoroji. He was born in Bombay in 1825. According to the customs of the Parsee community at that time, he was married at the age of fifteen. Noticing his progress in High School, his relatives thought of sending him to London to become a Barrister. But his mother and some other relations strongly opposed the move. The reason being that the few Parsee boys, who were sent to England with similar intentions, had been tempted to embrace Christianity. Therefore there was strong objection in the Parsee community to sending young men abroad. Slowly Dadabhai started to take part in social reforms, and educational activities. In 1852, Bombay Presidency Association was founded in Bombay. Dadabhai was one of the smart speakers. He said, "Under the British Government, we do not suffer any great zulum (oppression or injustice). We are comparatively happier under this kind of Government than we are likely to be under any other Government. Whatever evil we have to complain originates from one cause alone namely the ignorance of European officers coming fresh from home (i.e. England)."
(*Life of Dadabhai Naoroji* by R P Masani, page 55)
Just see how ignorant Dadabhai was. When crafty Governor Generals like Dalhousie were expanding their empire in India by the most unscrupulous and hideous means, Dadabhai was praising the British Raj!!. How absurd and foolhardy but how sincere he was!!

[Note – It is astonishing that Moderate leader Motilal Nehru also believed in such propaganda. See his speech at the First Provincial Conference of U.P held at Prayag on 29 March 1906, just a few days after *Vande Mataram* was banned]

Dadabhai's lecture reflects thinking of a great many educated Indians at that time. In 1852, he had not taken active part in politics and did not do so until several years later. But from the time he entered politics till his death in 1917 his mental outlook had changed very little. He ended his speech in 1852 with the words, "Let us appeal to the British sense of justice and fair play and take it for granted that England would do justice when she understands."
Soon after this speech (i.e. in 1855) Rango Bapu, an agent of deposed Maharaja of Satara and Azimulla, an agent of Nanasaheb Peshwa, returned to India from visit to England* with plans for an armed uprising against the English in India. Dadabhai also went to England at that time, but only for commercial transactions of his business. For next ten years, he was busy with his business, but due to financial difficulties he shut it down. However, he had amassed enough wealth to settle in England with comfort. Slowly he got into politics.

Note – * It should be remembered that until 1869 the journey from Bombay to London was via Cape of Good Hope in South Africa, a voyage of more than 8,000 miles!

London Indian Society

First of all, after consulting Mr W C Banerjee (President of the first session of Indian National Congress in 1885), who had settled in England, Dadabhai started London Indian Society and became its first president. This was the first political movement on behalf of Indians in Britain. Its members had to take an oath of allegiance to the British Crown. Dadabhai emphasised time and again, "we must strive for the diffusion of knowledge about Indian affairs in England. The British people are not kept well informed regarding the fact that the Indian government (run by British administrators) did not act up to the British ideal. If you succeed in dispelling this ignorance of the British people regarding misgovernment in India and convince John Bull* that it is to do a certain thing you may be quite sure that it will be done. Our battles are to be fought in the British Parliament in the last resort."

This thinking of Dadabhai is clearly seen in hundreds of his speeches and articles. Readers should refer to books published by Nateson and Co of Madras. Based on above lines of thinking, Dadabhai had carried on his mission for nearly thirty years. Indian students, merchants, doctors and lawyers who had settled in England used to take part in the activities of the society. In 1907 Dadabhai decided to leave London for India, due to health reasons and his society was also affected by the activities of *Abhinav Bharat*. This will be discussed later.

East India Association.

The London Indian Society was mainly run by Indians and was meant for propaganda. But Dadabhai also started another association, which involved both Indians and British. The British were officers who had worked in India on fat salaries and were then enjoying hefty pensions in London. They were commonly known as Anglo-Indians. The intention was that these retired officers, presumed to be sympathetic to Indian cause would discuss what administrative reforms were needed in India and make presentations to the British Parliament and also raise questions there. Lord Livedon was its first President. Former Governors, Commissioners, M. Ps and prominent politicians soon joined this association. At first, Dadabhai was just an ordinary member, but he soon became its secretary. British Administrators were supposed to pay attention to opinions of this association. Dadabhai wanted the association to have branches in India too. He visited Bombay with that intention. He collected funds from Rajas and Maharajas for the running of this association. The money was of course spent on the Anglo-Indians.*

Through this association, Dadabhai used to state that according to official statistics, Britain is draining away wealth from India annually to the tune of 1,500 million rupees under various headings (at prices in 1901). And this has been

going on for hundred years. As a result, India is becoming poor. The reason behind recurring famines and early deaths of people in India is this enormous

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* John Bull – Term used to denote a typical English gentleman, in those days.
* Anglo-Indians – This means British Officers who had served in the Indian Civil service

financial exploitation. The ICS officers are recruited only in England. From Collectors to the Governor General, they were paid huge salaries. Their pensions are also huge and have to be paid in pound sterling causing a severe burden on India's reserves. Therefore, if the examination for the ICS is conducted in India, many Indians could pass it and, as a result, the money spent on these officers will remain in India.

Over a period of thirty years, Dadabhai delivered hundreds of lectures and wrote hundreds of articles. The more he appealed to British humanity, British generosity, British sense of fair play, instead of having the required effect, even many Anglo-Indian members of the East India Association started doubting loyalty of Dadabhai. Let us see how he used to react on such occasions. In a speech he said, " No native from one end of India to the other is more Loyal than myself to British Rule. Because I am convinced that the salvation of India, its future prosperity, civilisation, political elevation, all depend on the continuance of the British Rule in India. It is because I wish that British Rule should long continue in India and that it is good for the rulers that they should know native feelings and opinions that I come forward and speak my mind freely and boldly."
(Ref – *Dadabhai's Life* by Masani, page 25)
But the Anglo-Indians knew that supporting Dadabhai's demands was contrary to their own interest, they opposed them. In the end, the association funded by thousands of rupees of money from India went in the hands of opponents of Dadabhai and he had to say goodbye to it.

Dadabhai fails to get elected in the elections of British Parliament.

As I said earlier, The Indian National Congress was founded in 1885. Dadabhai took part it its formation. In his speech he said, "Our battle must be fought in the British Parliament and we must therefore educate the British Public." And he propagated this view vigorously. Encouraged by the retired ICS officers like Sir Hume, Sir Wedderburn and some Congress leaders, Dadabhai stood for election to British Parliament from the Holborn constituency in London in 1886. He got financial support form India, but the Conservative British did not elect Dadabhai. Another leader Lal Mohan Bose also stood as a candidate for the same elections but failed to get elected. However, the second session of the Congress was to be held in Calcutta and Dadabhai was honoured by being elected as its President. In his speech he reiterated, "What is it for which we now meet? Is this Congress a nursery for sedition or rebellion against the British Government? (Cries of No! No!) Or is it another stone in the foundation of the stability of that Government? (Cries of yes! Yes!). Let us speak out like men and proclaim that we are loyal to the backbone!"
(Ref - *Dadabhai's Life* by Masani)

Dadabhai's main demand was that the examination for the ICS should be held in England and also in India so that Indians could enter in the service and rise to higher ranks. He laid emphasis on it. Some British M Ps promised to propose a suitable Bill in the British Parliament. But even in 1886, Dadabhai faced united opposition from Muslims. 'Congress is a Hindu organisation and does not represent Indian Muslims' – that was the theme of Sir Sayyad Ahmad who had founded The Patriotic Association (in India). The background information on this has already been given in my autobiography. This association and the likes of Islamia Anjuman complained –"If the examination for the ICS was to be held in India, it would benefit only Hindus. We Muslims are educationally backward and would not be able to compete. We Muslims are happy to live under British ICS officers, but NOT Hindu ICS officers." Even the Nizam supported this Muslim demand. They sent petitions and leaflets on these lines to the M Ps of British Parliament.

At heart, Dadabhai was furious at this agitation of the Muslims. He was a Parsee and not a Hindu, but was a true nationalist. He felt especially grieved to know that Mr Shahabuddin, the Muslim, whom he had always described as a Nationalist, had also joined the cries of opposition to his proposal. In a letter to Shahabuddin, dated 15 July 1887, Dadabhai wrote, "How your action has paralysed not only our own efforts, but the hands of the English friends and how keenly I feel this, more so, because you have based your action on selfish interests that because the Moslems are backwards, you would not allow the Hindus and all India to go forward. How you have retarded our progress for a long time!"
(Ref - *Dadabhai's life* by Masani)

But, though Dadabhai wrote this strong letter in private, he did not criticise the Muslim attitude in public. Because it was the stance of the Congress to bow to Muslims, whenever they raised their eyebrows. That is what was considered 'Nationalist' attitude by the Congressmen.

Dadabhai's new works – Poverty and Un-British Rule in India

By 1901, Dadabhai published in England an important treatise running into 500-600 pages. It consisted of his political speeches and articles so far. It was written with the intention of enlightening the British public about British rule in India, but I wonder if hardly ten in a million of them read it. Dadabhai had showed how the British were systematically looting wealth from India every year, and Indians were not given any rights to rectify the defects in administration. And though India had the benefit of British Raj, it was still suffering from famine, poverty and misery. This argument was fully supported by statistics and made any reader uneasy. It helped many Indians in their arguments and thoughts. But the title of the book was important – 'Poverty and Un-British Rule in India.' meaning that such misrule

and exploitation should not happen under the British Administration, as it is contrary to the British character.

British and Unbritish

From the title of Dadabhai's book, it was clear how the Indians (moderates as well as militants) used the words; 'British' to indicate divine and honourable and 'Un-British' to indicate satanical and unjust. It was just like detailing "Daivi" and "Asuri" qualities as described in Geeta, Chapter 16. Of course, the leaders implied that British meant divine. Therefore they had no objection to its perpetual rule. At times, the faults were made by British officers by mistake. Once these were removed, India would get rid of poverty, famine and desolation. The only exception was that of the revolutionaries who rejected this argument.

British Liberals and Conservatives

Indians had the same misconceptions about the difference between Liberal and Conservative politicians and the Liberals benefited financially from it. In my autobiography I have distinguished between 'autocratic' and, 'crafty and shrewd' administrators. The Conservatives were 'autocratic' while the liberals were 'crafty and shrewd'. Both were British imperialists. Conservatives like Lord Salisbury had openly said, "The liberals preach that under the British Empire, the British and Indians have equal rights, that is a political hypocrisy. " Conservative papers like *The Times* openly wrote, "The Queen's declaration of 1858* simply states that we will treat all the citizens of British Empire equally so far as it may be possible. Indian leaders conveniently forget the proviso '*so far as it may be possible'.* To be frank, we the British are the rulers, you Indians are our subjects. That is the reality of our relationship. We don't care whether you are loyal to us or not. We won over you, by force of arms, and would rule by force."

That was the stark reality, but it was unpalatable and frightening. So, the Indian leaders assumed that the Conservatives were Un-British and went on to please the Liberals whom they regarded as real British. Moreover, Mr Morley had published books praising freedom, equality and justice. British veterans of the Congress also belonged to the liberal wing. And how promising was their name – Liberal! Indian leaders were under the illusion that whenever the true British like Mr Morley and their liberal party would win elections in Britain we would enjoy equal rights as ordained in the Queen's declaration of 1858.*

Dadabhai enters British Parliament (1893)

And suddenly what a surprise! As if it was a divine blessing, in 1893 the Liberals came to power in England and more surprisingly even Dadabhai was elected as an M P from Finsbury constituency in London. Lord Salisbury, the conservative leader strongly campaigned against Dadabhai and had said, "Don't vote for that

Blackman. Liberals like Gladstone said that the British voters should vote for Dadabhai. Indians realising the importance of the election spent large amount of money. Dadabhai was formerly Divan (Chief Minister) of Baroda state where Malharrao Gaikawad was the Maharaja. Acknowledging this relationship, the

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- Queen's declaration of 1858. – After the break out of 1857 war in India against the rule of the (English) East India Company, Queen Victoria made a Declaration to pacify public opinion in India (published in Calcutta Gazette on 1 November 1858). Once, she had refused to listen to the grievances of Rajas and Maharajas whose states were annexed by Dulhousie, on the grounds that she could not interfere in the affairs of East India Company. Now she was compelled to take over the entire administration of India from the hands of the East India Company.
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then Maharaja Sayajirao helped in all possible ways and also gave his set of horse carts for the use of Dadabhai. Eventually he won, though by a small margin.

The news created wild excitement in India as if a major war was won. There were processions, and public meetings of rejoicing. To some extent that was natural. Many were under the impression that Indians were incapable of running public administration; there was no doubt about it. How can we run a democratic and 'up to date' state? That gloomy attitude was set aside by Dadabhai's victory. If the British voters are confident that Dadabhai has the ability to be elected to be their representative in their Parliament, then our leaders like Surendranath Banerjee and others also must have the same ability. This was the confidence that waved across the whole of India. It was good so far.

Wave of Loyalty to the British

But there was other side of the story. There were a large number of Indians who were proud to be 'loyal citizens' and their hopes were unduly raised. They kept on prophesying that today we have one M. P, tomorrow there may be ten or even twenty. And when this happens the English M. Ps will listen to our men who had become British M. Ps and eventually the administrative reforms that we have been clamouring for, will take place. (they did not want anything more). But we must never abandon the Liberal party.

The Conservatives were no less crafty. They too supported the candidature of Mr Bhavanagri, a Parsee who had opposed many policies of the Congress. He too got elected as an M.P in the British parliament. This of course severely jolted the liberals. But the Congress leaders behaved as if the election of Mr Bhavanagri did not count. They kept on saying that Dadabhai was the only Indian who had become an M.P in the British parliament.

An ineffective/ empty gesture

In practice, the election of Dadabhai was only a subtle tactic by the Liberal party. It was an empty gesture, merely a delaying ploy. And yet our Indian leaders got carried away so much.

The Irish example

Dadabhai had in front of him the example of Irish M. Ps who realised that they could not achieve much through British Parliament. Moreover, the Irish were White, Europeans. Britain had granted them right to send their own representatives to House of Commons. The elections were held on the basis of fighting for demands of the Irish people. Despite all this, they could not achieve any reforms beneficial to them. Their leaders like Parnell got exhausted. In the end most Irish M. Ps boycotted the British Parliament. They abandoned the right to send their representatives to British Parliament. Many turned to the Irish Home Rule Movement or Sinn Fein. Many went underground to carry out revolutionary activities.

These events were unfolding in front of eyes of members of the Indian Congress Party. It is said that one should be wiser from affairs of others. But what can you do if someone does not wish to wake up at all.

[*Note – Ireland was forced to become part of United Kingdom by the Act of Union of 1800. In the U.K. parliament in London, Ireland was allocated 100 seats out of 660 seats. But Catholics, who were in majority in Ireland, were given right to become M. Ps only in 1829. Irish Protestants, who were descendents of Scottish Protestant settlers, of course did not want independence for Ireland.*]

Personality of Dadabhai

Of course, this does not in any way affect the greatness of Dadabhai. His efforts were continuous. He had a strong personality, which resulted in his election victory. In the Parliament too he behaved at par with the British Ministers. He was enthusiastic about his idea of the Parliamentary Front. But soon he realised that whenever he put forward any proposals of administrative reforms in India, Liberals M. Ps shied away. There was Liberal Government in power. Years went by. But Dadabhai could not stop any wealth being looted regularly by the British. He could not get any Indians appointed to high posts in India. His only success was getting his demand that the ICS examination should be held in India and England, accepted and passed in the British Parliament. Even that was declared ‘impracticable’ by the Executive officers of the Administration in India. Had this happened elsewhere the entire administration would have been sacked for contempt of Parliament. Dadabhai thus returned empty handed when the term of the Liberal government was completed.

Dadabhai unknowingly paid tribute to Indian Revolutionaries.

Faced with failures after failures in his attempts, Dadabhai became angry and even started to threaten the British. He once said, "Do not invite a catastrophe by being too obdurate. The Government should recollect how such obdurate conduct on the part of the British Government led to 1857."
(See Dadabhai's speeches by Natesan)
But did he realise what he was saying? Suppose the Great War of 1857 had not taken place, with what would have Dadabhai and others threatened the British Government? So, even their Parliamentary Front movement needed support of the revolutionaries.

British Committee of the Indian National Congress

In around 1888, the Indian National Congress had established a committee in London. The purpose was to spread knowledge in Britain about aims, resolutions and loyalty of the Congress. It also published a paper entitled '*India*'. Dadabhai was a member of this committee also. But the real activists were again persons like Sir Hume, Wedderburn and others who were also pioneers of the Congress. Thousands of rupees were raised in India for the running of this committee. In addition, the editor, supplier and servants were all British. Their expenses too were born by Indian supporters. Though this committee considered it to be London representative of Indian political opinion, it was never awarded that status by the British Government who did not acknowledge receipts of various resolutions and petitions sent by this committee.

At times, commissions like the Welby Commission (1897) were appointed to inquire into administration of India, at the insistence of likes of Dadabhai.
The British Committee would invite Indian leaders such as Surendranath Banerjee, Wacha or Gokhale to testify in front of such commissions and also to enlighten the British about the true state of affairs in India. The British Committee would also arrange public lectures by such leaders.

Despite such efforts however, most British papers did not publish any news about the activities of the British Committee or about any resolutions passed in India. The committee even purchased some shares in a paper so that it will give publicity to its activities. At times it paid the papers to publish its activities. But even then, would the readers be interested in reading news about India? Hardly ten in a million bothered.

Then came 1897

In 1897, Queen Victoria completed 60 years of her reign. There were plans for great celebrations throughout the British Empire. The British Committee invited a deputation of leaders from India and arranged their lectures in British Towns and Cities. To conclude these lectures, a Conference of Indians in Britain was held

under the auspices of Dadabhai, Wacha and Gokhale. The following resolution was passed unanimously –
"Unless the present unrighteous, un-British system of Government is reformed into a truly righteous and truly British system, destruction of India and disaster to the British Empire are inevitable….. We Indians believe that our highest patriotism and best interests demand the continuance of the British Rule."
(Ref - *Dadabhai's life* by Masani, p396)

The British people did not pay the slightest attention to this resolution. They were busy celebrating the Jubilee.

But in a far away place called Pune?

On the day of Jubilee, i.e. 22 June 1897, Chaphekar brothers shot and killed Mr Rand and Lt Ayhurst to avenge the atrocities of the British during the outbreak of bubonic plague in Pune. And all of a sudden it made headlines in British papers. The editors started asking question – who was responsible for this deed? Who is this Chaphekar? His shot resembles the outburst of Mangal Pandey of 1857!

In India, especially in Bombay Province, British officers were furious. I remember the situation described in a song of 'Sanmitra Samaj', which was sung at public functions –

There were arrests of public figures like Tilak, Natu and others. People used to say –

First the Poonaite, then Brahmin and Kokanastha at that.
One of them killed a White man.
Arrest someone of them.

Resolutions of the Congress and sparks of the revolutionaries.

The purpose of this chapter is only to review the movements of Indians in Britain until I reached London in 1906. In that context only, I have mentioned killing of Mr Rand and Lt Ayhurst by Chaphekar brothers. But even that event illustrated that it was the activities of revolutionaries that drew the attention of the British public rather than the resolutions of the Congress. Conservative papers naturally justified the mass arrests in Bombay Province after the Chaphekar episode. But even the liberal papers wrote series of articles on India and claimed that the rebellion must be crushed. It was even strange that the Loyal members of the Indian Congress were also labelled – disloyal and responsible for the rebellion!!

Mr Hyndman

There was only one exception who gave a fitting reply to the comments in British Newspapers at that time. He was not one of the leaders of the Congress Party,

but editor of *The Justice* paper, Mr Hyndman. As usual he said that he condemned the action of Chaphekar but then retorted, “You say the rebellious tendency is on the increase in India. But you have imposed harsh rule over India. If the Indians are now prepared to overthrow your tyrannical rule by armed revolution, it is not a great surprise. The astonishing thing is that, that revolution did not take place before.”

Mr Hyndman was a leader of the new political party – Social Democrats. Its leaders were British. Their main aim was opposition to the British Empire. And because of this basic stand, the Liberals were naturally against them, but even the newly founded Labour Party also kept aloof and called them ‘Extreme Socialists.’ The reason being that the Social Democrats were propagating dissolution of the British Empire for the benefit of the British workers. The Labour Party did not support this theory. The enormous wealth being looted by the British rulers benefited not only the middle class but also the working class, e.g. soldiers, naval ratings, workers in factories. And therefore the British people fully supported the British Raj. The Social Democrats therefore had very little support in England. However, the personality of Hyndman had its impression on public life. Social Democrats were more active in Europe. Mr Hyndman was respected as a European leader. He criticised the British Administration so severely that though Indian leaders liked it at heart, they were afraid of supporting him in public.

Dadabhai sincerely loved Mr Hyndman. They were good friends. In his public meetings Dadabhai arranged for speeches by Mr Hyndman. Once at a public meeting Mr Gokhale shared the same platform as Mr Hyndman. British members of the British Committee of Congress party, like Wedderburn reprimanded Dadabhai and Gokhale. On the other hand Hyndman criticised the Indian leaders for being under the thumbs of British Liberals. Angered by criticism of British Administration in India at the time of Chaphekar episode, British Liberals took Dadabhai and Gokhale to task. With the hope of becoming a candidate for the Liberal party in the forthcoming elections and possibility of its support in election campaign, Dadabhai broke his relation with Mr Hyndman. He wrote –
“I remain of the same view that after reading your article in *‘Justice’* I cannot any more work with you and the Social Democratic Federation on Indian matters. My desire and aim have been not to encourage a rebellion but to prevent it and to make the British connection with India a blessing to both. Unfortunately it is not the case as yet in so far as India is concerned but it is owing to evil system of Government by the executive authority in spite of the wishes of the sovereign, the people and the parliament of England to govern righteously.”

At the same time, Mr Gokhale withdrew his statements about atrocities committed by British soldiers in Pune during the outbreak of the plague, which resulted in the Chaphekar episode. He apologised without reservation to Lord Sandhurst, the Governor of Bombay province.

By the time I reached London, London Indian Society, East India Association and the British Committee of the Indian National Congress were the main instruments of political activities in London. I have reviewed their work. But just 1 ½ years before my arrival in London, yet another movement was taking place and would soon replace the above three as main sources of Indian political activity. It was Indian Home Rule Society of Shyamji Krishnavarma. It is time I introduced him.

Shyamji Krishnavarma (1857 –1930)

In 1950, Shyamji's biography in English by Indulal Yadnik was published.
It has been thoroughly researched and written. One should really read it to understand Shyamji's work. I am briefly giving the following information –
On 4 October 1857, Shyamji Krishnavarma was born in Mandavi in the state of Cutch (Gujarat). He was born in Bhansali community. By the age of ten, he lost both of his parents. With the help of his relatives he came to Bombay for his education. At the same time his relatives wanted him to learn Sanskrit in the traditional way in a Pathashala. He soon became proficient in Sanskrit. He had to leave his education before passing Matriculation examination. Swami Dayanand Saraswati, Founder of Arya Samaj came to Bombay and was impressed by Shyamji's command of Sanskrit. Shyamji soon became a member of Arya Samaj.

In 1875, Shyamji was married to Bhanumati, daughter of a rich person, Sheth Chhabildas Lallubhai.

In 1877, Shyamji visited the cities of Nasik, Poona, Karnavati, Kashi and Lahore to deliver his lectures in Sanskrit. He was given presentations by various scholars. In Poona, he was commended by Prof Kunte, Mr Joshi, secretary of Sarvajanik Sabha, Krishnashastri Chiplunkar, Prof Kathawate and Justice M G Ranade. Raobahaddur Gopal Krishna Deshmukh had developed a liking for Shyamji.

In 1876, Prof Monier Williams of Oxford University came to Bombay and was looking for an assistant to work in Oxford, who was proficient in English and had learnt Sanskrit in traditional way. Shyamji was just such a man. Swami Dayanand was pleased with the prospect of Shyamji going to England. But he insisted that he should learn Vedas first from Swamji. Shyamji was more interested in going to England than devoting to the work of Arya Samaj. Swamji was displeased. But Shyamji went to Oxford just as an ordinary Indian.

In the meantime, though Prof Moiner had agreed to take Shaymji with him to Oxford, he suddenly departed to England as arrangements for Shyamji could not be made in time. But Shyamji was determined to go to England. He borrowed money from his in-laws. In March 1879, he left Bombay for London. He registered for B.A degree with Balliol College, Oxford. He continued to impress British professors with his command of Sanskrit. He had also learnt Greek and

Latin. Sir Richard Temple, Governor of Bombay recommended that Maharaja of Kutch should offer a scholarship to Shyamji. This was granted.

In 1881, Shyamji delivered a lecture at the Royal Asiatic Society of London. He emphasised that the art of writing was known in the Vedic times. For this paper he was elected a Member of the Society.
In the same year he was honoured to be sent as India's representative for the fifth Oriental Congress in Berlin by Marquis of Harlington, the then Secretary of State for India. Shyamji emphasised there that Sanskrit was not a dead language like Latin but a live one.
In 1883, he was again sent as India’s representative to the Oriental Conference in London, by the Earl of Kimberley, the then Secretary of State for India.

With such high level contacts Shyamji became a member of the prestigious Empire Club. Its members included former Governors, Governor Generals, and Commanders in Chief.

In 1883, Shyamji obtained his B.A degree from Oxford University. Some say that he was the first Indian to graduate from Oxford. He had letters of recommendations from Prof Maxmuller, Prof Morrison, Dr Jawet and former Viceroy Lord Northbrook. The last one stated – He (Shyamji) is eminently qualified for a high post in Government Service. That is exactly what Shyamji wanted.
He had also had some correspondence with British Prime Minister Gladstone. His letter dated 11 April 1883 is an indication of his intention. Shyamji wrote to Gladstone, “You have appointed Lord Rippon as Viceroy of India and I have received many letters commending your choice for this appointment.”

It seems that Shyamji was also in touch with Dadabhai Naoroji, but did not take part in his political activities. Shyamji became a Barrister in January 1885 and returned to India permanently.

On reaching India, Shyamji was highly recommended for a high administrative post by Gopal Krishna Deshmukh and along with similar recommendations from high British Officials he soon obtained the post of Divan (Chief Minister) of state of Ratlam. He soon impressed the Maharaja and the Political Agent with his work. When he left his post due to ill health Maharaja offered him a sum of 32,000 Rupees in gratitude.

Shyamji then started his practice as a Barrister in Ajmer. He invested money in stocks and shares of Mills to ensure regular income. But apart from money Shyamji wanted high post of administration. He was making efforts to secure such a post. He got elected to Ajmer Council and took advantage to further his business career.

After four years in Ajmer, he was offered the post of Divan of Udaipur in December 1892. He pleased the Maharaja with his work. It needs to be emphasised that he did not take part in any political, educational, or religious reform movements. He just maintained his status. However, he did not affect the reputation of Udaipur in any way. He laid sound foundation for economy of the state. He was praised by the British Political Agent as a good administrator. As an individual he proved to be a great person.

After serving the Maharaja of Udaipur for two to two and a half years he was offered the post of Divan of Junagad state. Financially that post was very attractive. Maharaja of Udaipur agreed to Shyamji leaving his state and said that Shyamji could come back as a Divan any time.

In 1895, Shyamji accepted the post of Divan in Junagad. But soon he realised that there were some dubious affairs going on. Either he had to acquiesce to these or leave to maintain his own standards. However, there was no religious conflict. There were Hindus and Muslims on both sides. The real reason was selfishness. Worst was the fact that an Englishman named Mackonacki, whom Shyamji had done favour in getting a job for him in the state, had started the intrigue. They were both studying in Oxford at one time. Shyamji wanted someone to support him in the state. However, he soon became Shyamji's opponent and poisoned the mind of the British Political Agent and the Nawab. So much so that within a matter of eight months the Nawab asked Shyamji to leave his state for his misbehaviour. He was dismissed from the post of Divan. No specific charges were made.

Shyamji was stunned. He had no option but leave the state. However he told his opponents, "Be warned. I know many British officers from the level of Resident to Viceroy and even the Secretary of State for India. This is not the dark ages. This is British Raj – based on rule of law and justice. If the Nawab insists, he may lose his own throne. " Shyamji demanded forty thousand rupees as compensation from the Nawab. He refused. Shyamji took his case to the Political Agent, but he took the side of Mr Mackonacki. Shyamji then appealed to all the British officers right up to Secretary of State for India. But no one raised a finger against the decision of the political agent. Shyamji decided to wager one by one all the commendations he had received in the past, to see if this would influence the British authorities to his point of view, but of no avail.

In September 1895, after being driven out of Junagad, Shyamji went back to Maharaja of Udaipur who was glad to accept Shyamji as his Divan, as promised before. But the appointment needed the approval of Political Agent who happened to be Curzon Wyllie. We will meet Wyllie again later in the episode of Madanlal Dhingra. Wyllie wrote to Shyamji, "You were dismissed from the state of Junagad for bad character and as long as you cannot prove to be of good character, I cannot agree to you becoming the Divan in Udaipur again."

Trapped on all sides, Shyamji now realised that the British were all the same and would support each other. That was the truth, which Shyamji had not come to accept before. It was miss-belief that the British Raj was not in dark ages. After the bitter personal experience, his confidence in the British character was shattered.

Shyamji did not know whom to turn. Someone should put forward all the facts in front of the public and seek redress. *Times of India* had justified the action of the Nawab of Junagad. There was just one person left – Tilak. He was well known to be a fighter for justice for people. This was evident in the old case of an adopted son of Maharaja of Kolhapur (1882) and recent case of Mr Bapat in the state of Baroda. Shyamji thought that Tilak might help him in exposing injustice done to him. It seems that either he met Tilak before going to Junagad or had some correspondence with him. He was in the habit of keeping in touch with such persons of importance and getting their commendations. It seems that he wrote a letter to Tilak in 1896 seeking redress. Tilak replied, " Please send important documents relating to your case." Shyamji had obliged.

There is another letter in January 1896. Tilak asked, "A Brahmin youth wishes to get military training. Is it possible for you to use your influence and get him recruited to army of the state?"
Shyamji had come back to Udaipur as Divan.* It is not clear if Shyamji obliged. It seems that he did not. One can presume that this youth was Chaphekar. Shyamji had established contact with Tilak for purely personal cause. He was not interested in taking part in any political or public activities of Tilak.

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* Some of the details of life of Shyamji are not clear. But it seems that Wyllie had eventually consented to Shyamji becoming Divan of Udaipur state.

Shyamji suddenly moves to England (1897)

But the whole country was shattered by the killing of Mr Rand and Lt Ayhurst in 1897. Tilak was arrested and later charged with sedition. Natu brothers of Poona were detained without trial and charge. For many days people did not know where they were kept. Shyamji got worried. He had already become unpopular with the British Administrators. He had no faith left in their justice system. True, he had not taken part in any political activity of Tilak but had some correspondence with him for his help in his personal injustice. He got worried that if Tilak's house was searched, their correspondence would come to light and the British would not hesitate in detaining him without charge. Instead of waiting for any action by the authorities he decided to leave India and move to England, which was a safer place as far as Law was concerned. So he suddenly resigned as Divan of Udaipur state and moved to England with his wife.

Move made but not for active politics.

The real reason behind Shyamji's move to London has been given above. Some believe that he wanted to devote the remainder of his life to politics and become a fiercer fighter than Tilak in the free atmosphere of England. There is no reason to believe in that assumption. When I got acquainted with Shyamji and raised the question of his sudden departure to London, he never pretended that he wanted to devote entirely to the service of India.

In 1905, Shyamji started his paper named *The Indian Sociologist*. In its July 1907 issue he explained. " It is folly for a man to allow himself to be arrested by an unsympathetic government and thus be deprived of action when by anticipating matters he can avoid such results. Just ten years ago when our friend Mr Tilak and the Natu brothers were arrested, we decided to leave India and settle in England."

Even after his arrival in England, Shyamji did not take part in any political or social activity directly or indirectly for eight years.

Shyamji's transformation.

However, after coming to London, Shyamji started to develop his ideas. He had earned enough money to live like a rich person and also invested in stocks and shares in England and France. So, financially he was independent. He was not therefore afraid of the Anglo-Indians. He felt relatively safer in England as it respected personal liberty and there was rule of law.

In his young age, he was a disciple of Swami Dayanand Saraswati. So some seeds of independent thinking were sown then which now started to show fruits. He was greatly influenced by the philosophy of Herbert Spencer. Spencer had severely criticised the economic exploitation of India by Britain. The criticism was fully justified and supported by evidence.

Sometimes minor or trivial events transform lives of many great persons. Surendranath Banerjee was forced to resign from the ICS for a minor reason. But as the result, his personal ambition changed and he devoted his life for the betterment of fellow Indians. In 1879,Vasudev Balwant Phadake was denied leave even to attend the cremation of his mother and that transformed his attitude and he resolved to overthrow the British Raj. This has happened in cases of Saints also. They faced some personal difficulties and as the result they turned to God and changed their frame of mind. Shyamji had been shattered with his experience in Junagad. His loyalty to the British took a severe shake up and he saw light.

Shyamji was disgusted with the British Administration and therefore he did not join British Committee of the Indian National Congress or the London Indian Society, both were started by Dadabhai. He started to propagate his views to

Indian leaders, his friends and especially Indian 2students. Slowly a group was being formed and by 1902 they had their own ideas of how to liberate India from the yoke of the British.

Death of Herbert Spencer (1903).

All of a sudden, in December 1903, the British philosopher Herbert Spencer died. He was affectionately called Harbhat Pendse in Maharashtra. Many of his works were translated into Marathi. Young leaders like Tilak and Agarkar were greatly influenced by his philosophy. In my school days I read all the Marathi translations of his works. And at a later date, I studied all his works with deep interest. Shyamji was deeply devoted to Spencer and was present at his funeral in London. Shyamji made a small speech and as a token of his gratitude, he declared a donation of 1,000 pounds (some 15,000 rupees in those days). This was accepted by Oxford University and through this fund they used to arrange lectures annually on the philosophy of Spencer by well-known scholars. British people were much impressed by generosity of Shyamji and he became well-known overnight.

First political act of Shyamji

On 8 December 1904, fell the first anniversary of death of Spencer. On that occasion Shyamji declared his intention to award ‘Herbert Spencer Travelling Fellowship’ of Rs 2,000 each to five graduates from India. There were two conditions –
The first one being -. The recipient should study in England, which will allow him to follow his chosen profession.
We will discuss the second condition very soon. One of the fellowships was to be given in the name of Swami Dayanand.

Shyamji wanted to emphasise the importance of these fellowships through the Indian National Congress. It was going to hold its annual session in December in Bombay. Shyamji therefore wrote a detailed letter to Sir Wedderburn outlining his plan and pleaded that his letter should be read in the session of Congress. It read, “ Details of my fellowships will be published later. But one condition must be specifically stated. Namely that on return to India the recipient must never accept service of any kind under the British Administration in India as it is unjust and uncontrolled. The recipient therefore must maintain his independent standing in the society. Socrates has said, “One, who has to oppose honestly acts of uncontrolled and unjust repressive regime and fight for truth, must maintain his independence.”

“Indians must show respect for Herbert Spencer. For many years he had condemned the British Raj, which uses Native Indian troops to enslave Indians, to impose heavy taxes on essentials like salt, and to impose heavy taxes on poor people. He had shown quite clearly that the English have conquered India for

England’s own benefit. He further maintained that if the Indians were to overthrow the yoke of British Raj, they could not be blamed in any way. Every Indian should cherish memories of such a person.”

It was obvious that such a letter was not going to be read at the annual session of the Congress. Veterans like Sir Hume, Wedderburn and Cotton were from the class of exploiters. Congress was maintaining that more and more posts, services, and positions under the British Raj should be accepted by Indians. There was no way Shyamji’s letter would be read at such a Congress. They have been maintaining that the British Raj was meant for the benefit of Indians. How could they support overthrow of the same? The letter was thrown in waste paper basket. Later, when Shyamji insisted on a reply, Mr Wedderburn wrote, “ The second paragraph (of your letter) contained such a severe denunciation of the Indian Government that it seemed inexpedient for me to read that part publicly in the Congress, considering how important it is for the congress to maintain its character for loyalty and moderation.”

The paper *Indian Sociologist*.

Thus, Shyamji did not succeed in propagating his views through the Indian National Congress and felt the need for starting an independent publication of his own for propagating his views. Accordingly, on 1 January 1905, he started his monthly paper *The Indian Sociologist*. Its objective was clearly stated on the front page – An Organ of Freedom and of political, social and religious reform. Thus the intention was not just political, but also all round progress of the Indian society. It was not a magazine. It merely reflected views of Shyamji. But it was far more forthcoming and effective for a number of years to come. More about it later.

On the very first issue, words of Herbert Spencer were printed – Resistance to aggression is not simply justifiable but imperative. Non-resistance hurts both altruism and egoism.

One has to add however that Shyamji was not proposing an armed revolution or complete independence. His thoughts had not advanced that far. He wrote, “Considering the political connection between India and Britain, time has come for someone in England to state the true position of Indians in India to the British public. **Until now Indians had not stated their sufferings, sorrows, demands and expectations in front of the British people. We therefore wish to carry out that function. It will be our duty and privilege to plead the cause of India before the Bar of Public opinion in Great Britain and Ireland**. “

Thus, indirectly, Shyamji had been suggesting that The London Indian Society, The British Committee of the Indian National Congress and its publication *‘India’* were not representative of Indian masses, because they were controlled by the Anglo-Indians like Sir Hume and therefore did not reflect Indian opinion.

The Indian Sociologist, on the other hand was free from such influence and therefore the true mouthpiece of Indians.

The astonishing thing was that if the British Committee of the Indian National Congress was not a true representative of Indians, as it was guided by retired British ICS officers, should not, by the same token, we regard the Indian National Congress also as not representing Indians, as it was under the influence of the same retired British ICS officers? After all they insisted on making it a 'Loyal' organisation. It was surprising that Shyamji did not appreciate this line of thinking and assured his readers that he would support the aims and policies of the Congress Party.

We must also remember that as explained above, Shyamji conferred on the British people the honour of becoming Judges to the sad plight of Indians!! As if the only thing that was remaining was for a true representative of Indians to explain sufferings of the Indian people to the British people. And then by a magic wand the British people were going to remove all the injustices in India!! One can say that at start Shyamji was not determined enough or clear in his mind and thoughts. But he was rapidly getting away from being a 'Loyal to British crown subject' to becoming an anti-British person.

Founding of the Indian Home Rule Society.

Shyamji was disgusted with 'Loyalty to the British Crown' attitude of Congress leaders. For a number of years the Irish were demanding *Home Rule for Ireland*. It was natural that Shyamji should be interested in a similar movement for India. Of course, such a demand or agitation was risky and dangerous at that time. Congress leaders wished to remain aloof from Irish Home Rule movement as it was openly seen to be <u>not loyal</u> to the British crown (and loyalty to the British Crown was the cardinal principle of Indian Moderates). But Shyamji had no such inhibition. He established contacts with the Irish Home Rule agitators. And taking a cue from them, he suggested that unlike the Congress leaders, we should not merely demand administrative reforms but go further and say – hand over the administration of India to us. Give us 'Home Rule'. Shyamji felt the need of a new political party for achieving this aim.

One must admit that this thinking was many paces ahead of the aims of the Congress. But it was still short of 'complete independence.' May be, Shyamji was not that advanced in his thoughts. Moreover there were legal constraints in England. However, the demand for home rule for India was perfectly legal in England.

On 18 February 1905, Shyamji invited about twenty selected Indians to his house (now 60 Muswell Hill Road, London N 10) to start Indian Home Rule Society. The invitees included, Barrister Rana, Dr C Muthew, Barrister Parekh, J C Mukherjee, M R Jayakar and Suhravardi.

The reason put forward for starting this new society was this – The associations in England, which are meant for advancement of people in India, are under the influence of former British bureaucrats and therefore an independent association run entirely by Indians has become necessary. Our aim is – Government for the people, of the people and by the people in India. It is 'natural right' of all Indians and it has become necessary to establish an association in England for this purpose. We will strive to achieve our goal of Home Rule for India by all practical means. We will propagate our views throughout Britain and Ireland. We will make efforts to impress on the minds of Indians the benefits of our movement, namely unity and freedom.

Having established the aims and objectives and set a programme, an executive committee was chosen.
President – Shyamji.
Vice President – Barrister Rana.
Members of the Committee – Godrej and Surhavardi.
Secretary – Mr J C Mukharjee.

Establishment of India House

Shyamji decided to further the cause of Home Rule. He therefore started a hostel for Indian students, visitors and leaders. He purchased a big corner house in the Highgate area of London (now 65 Cromwell Avenue, London N6). This area was the healthiest in Great Britain and Ireland. It was named *India House*. Tram, Underground and Bus connections were conveniently at hand. There were huge parks nearby – Waterloo Park, Highgate Woods and Queen's Woods. In the back garden of the house was a large area for taking exercises or playing games like Tennis. There was accommodation for 25 people. In the basement, there was a library and enough room for reading, and arranging lectures. Administration was kept in the hands of Indians. Drinking was forbidden. Rest of the routine was on the lines of Ruskin Institute of Oxford. Those who were offered scholarships by Shyamji, had to pay 16 shillings a week for board and lodge. Others had to pay bit more.

The inauguration took place on 1 July 1905. The ceremony was attended by some British and Irish gentlemen who sincerely wished well for the cause of Indian emancipation. This included leader of Social Democratic Party Mr Hyndman, Mr Sweeny of the Positivist Society, Editor of *Justice* paper Mr Swelch and some members of Irish Home Rule movement. Among Indian leaders present were, Dadabhai Naoroji, Lala Lajpat Rai and Madam Cama. Some Indian students were also present. After introduction by Shyamji, Mr Hyndman did the inauguration. His speech was strong not only for moderates like Dadabhai but even for Shyamji. He said –

Loyalty to British means disloyalty to India

“ As things stand, loyalty to Great Britain means treachery to India. I have met many Indians and the loyalty to British Rule, which the majority have professed, has been disgusting. Either they were insincere or they were ignorant. But, of late, I rejoice to see that a new spirit has been manifested. Thus there are men and women here this afternoon from different provinces of India and of different schools of thought, but the ideal; namely, the final emancipation is the same with all. “

“Indians have until now hugged their chains. From England itself there is nothing to be hoped.”

“It is the immoderate men, the determined men, the fanatical men who will work out the salvation of India by herself. The institution of this India House is a great step in that direction of Indian growth and Indian emancipation.”

“Some of those who are here this afternoon may live to see the first fruit of its triumphant success.”

But what is your programme?

Shyamji caused a sensation in the political circles in England, because of his Home Rule movement. Indian militants welcomed it. Indian Moderates ignored it. But Anglo-Indian papers like *The Pioneer* (of Prayag) and their societies were furious and warned, “If anyone dared demand Home Rule in India and make violent speeches like the one by Mr Hyndman and wrote articles with the same intention, he would have been sent to the gallows or sent to transportation. Therefore the coward editor of ‘*Indian Sociologist*’ ran away to England and is spreading sedition among Indians by taking advantage of the liberal atmosphere there. **Those demanding Home Rule should remember that they have to face the military might of the British. Do they want to spill blood? If not how are they going to achieve their object?**”

Moderates also used similar but milder language and asked, “It is easy to say that our methods of petitions and presentations are useless, but apart from those what means have you got? It is easy to demand Home Rule. One can even demand heaven. But apart from outrageous words, what is your programme?” This question was also in the minds of supporters of Shyamji. It was essential that a fitting reply was given. He did not have to go far. He had in front of him Sinn Fein who had declared a programme of Passive Resistance. Shyamji based his programme on similar lines and within a period of three months he produced a document. It was published in the October 1905 issue of *The Indian Sociologist.*

“ Now, in order to put an end to the pernicious system of the government of one country by another, such as obtains in the case of India, there seem to be only three ways in which this can be accomplished, namely,
(1) The voluntary withdrawal of English occupation.
(2) A successful effort on the part of Indians to throw off the foreign yoke.
(3) The disinterested intervention of some Foreign power in favour of India.

The last expedient is obviously out of the question in the present political and moral condition of the world.

“ As to the second expedient, Mr Meredith Townsend in his work ‘Asia and Europe’ asks ‘Will England retain India?’ Although he haughtily believes that ‘the British dominion over the great peninsula of Asia is a benefit to mankind!’ he holds that ‘the empire which came in a day will disappear in a night.’ In his opinion it is not necessary for Indians to resort to arms for compelling England to relinquish its hold on India. He neatly expressed himself and enforces his argument in the following words -
“There are no white servants, and even grooms, no white postman, the Empire would collapse like a house of cards, and every ruling man would be starving prisoner in his own house. He would not move or feed himself or get water.”
“If anyone refuses to buy or sell any commodity, or to have any transactions with any class of people, he commits no crime known to law. It is therefore plain that Indians can obtain emancipation by simply refusing to help their foreign master without incurring the evils of a violent revolution. “

Commenting on above article of Shyamji, *Pioneer* the Anglo-Indian paper (of Prayag) said, “In reality, Shyamji is sponsoring an armed revolution.” Shyamji replied, “We have never advocated the use of Force as a part of our political programme! We are thoroughly convinced that the existence of the feeling of common nationality creating a notion that it was shameful to assist the foreigner in maintaining his dominion - to quote Professor Sir J R Seeley – is the best remedy for the existing evils, and that Indians have no need to take up arms in order to free their country from the present foreign domination.”

Furthering his idea of Passive Resistance, Shyamji proposed,
(1) No Indian should invest money in Government stocks.
(2) India should denounce the public debt imposed by British administration.
(3) Indians should boycott civil and military services.
(4) Indians should boycott Government sponsored schools and colleges as they invariably produce ‘Loyal’ students.
(5) Indian Barristers, Solicitors and Lawyers should boycott British courts and set up Civil courts to settle their differences.

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The purpose of this chapter is to review the political movements run by Indians in London until I arrived there. Therefore I stated that Shyamji sponsored the idea

of Home Rule for India and that Passive Resistance as the weapon for achieving the same. But it has to be stated that it was Bipinchandra Pal who proposed these measures first.

Bipinchandra Pal (1858 – 1932) put forward above programme first.

There was great anger in India after Lord Curzon arrogantly proposed partition of Bengal in 1903. 'Loyalty' to the British of Lala Lajpat Rai and Bipinchandra Pal was burnt to ashes. Bipinchandra Pal had even been to England to study the possibility of approaching the British public to seek redress and also to follow the Parliamentary Front*. He had realised that begging bowl attitude of the Congress was bound to fail. A new movement had to be based on self-confidence. He had studied the example of Sinn Fein and their Passive Resistance and produced his own programme of action. It was published in his weekly paper *New India* and in the daily *Vande Mataram*. In short this is what Pal said –

"Time has now come to say good bye to the British. The question no longer is whether you should partition Bengal or not; or whether you should make some administrative reforms for our benefit or not. We want the right to administer ourselves. We want Autonomy. We know that you are not willing to accede to our demands. We will no longer beg favours from you. We have to make it impossible for you to govern. And therefore we will resort to Passive Resistance."

Afterwards, Bipinbabu had outlined his programme on the same lines as proposed by Shyamji.

The only exception was of the armed revolutionaries. They laughed at the 'invincible weapon' of Passive Resistance. However, until then no political leader or newspaper had set such clear cut, uncompromising forward looking aim.

After the partition of Bengal, next to Surendranath, Bipinchandra Pal impressed Indian youth with his speeches and writings.

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Now, let us return to Shyamji's work in London.

Naturally, he wished that all leaders in India should support his demand for Home Rule and start a programme of general dissociation from the British. But not only the Moderates, even the Militants shied away and did not come forward for opening a branch of Home Rule movement. The only exception being that of Bipinchandra Pal, who had pioneered the idea. But he did not have any

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* Parliament Front – The idea was to lobby British M Ps who would raise questions relating to Administration in India, ultimately resulting in reforms in Indian administration. This is what Dadabhai tried to do.

organisation behind him. Even, in later life, he was not an organiser. The only person who had that skill was the militant leader Tilak. Shyamji had started to correspond with Tilak and informed him of his political movement. Tilak, in his

paper *Kesari*, published details of Shyamji's Home Rule movement in London and wrote an article expounding Shyamji's programme without in any way suggesting his support. In a letter dated 14 July 1905, Tilak explained to Shyamji why he could not undertake Home Rule movement at present. He said, "I wished that you had more active members in London. Then lot more could be achieved. I congratulate you for the work you are carrying out with self-sacrifice. Unfortunately I still cannot come to London. Moreover, it is impossible that we in India will enjoy the freedom of thought, expression and propagation that you find in England.

But Dadabhai was already talking of Self Government in 1904.

Shyamji started his Indian Home Rule society in 1905. But Dadabhai was also demanding Self Government for India through his lectures. In India the atmosphere was charged on account of the arrogant and autocratic rule of Lord Curzon (1898-1905). Dadabhai must have been delighted by the increased public awareness. He would have hoped for reaching the next goal. In 1904 a deputation of Congress under leadership of Gokhale was sent to London for explaining to the British public the growing unrest in India due to the arrogant attitude of Lord Curzon. Lala Lajpat Rai was also a member of the deputation. They delivered lectures at various towns and cities in England. On this occasion, Dadabhai had said, "**Time has passed for making administrative reforms here and there, in India. It is in the interest of both Britain and India that like Australia and Canada, India should also be granted Self-Government.**" Gokhale also said that Self Government for India within the British Empire is our political aspiration. Lala Lajpat Rai was even more forward looking. He was present at the inauguration of the India House. Not only that, he was the first paying guest there and he used to state this proudly. Anglo-Indian members of the British Committee of the Indian National Congress. Like Sir Cotton and Wedderburn became furious at such demands of Dadabhai and Gokhale. They said that when even the Congress party itself has not been sponsoring 'Self – Government' why are you proposing the same when you are on delegation from the Congress? Moreover, why are you maintaining contacts with Shyamji who is working against Congress? Dadabhai and Gokhale made their excuses but Lala Lajpat Rai bluntly replied, "I came as a member of the deputation, because I was asked. But that does not mean I have no independent opinion of my own. I will abide by my conscience. If need be, I will resign from the deputation."

Why the word 'Home Rule' was not used?

It may sound strange that though Dadabhai implied nothing different from Shyamji's 'Home Rule' he declined to use the word 'Home Rule'. Why? Bipinbabu's 'Autonomy', Shyamji's 'Home Rule' or Dadabhai's 'Self Government', all meant the same, namely, internal freedom to rule within the British Empire.

Still most Indian leaders were scared to use the word ‘Home Rule’. The reason was simple. The British had experienced enough trouble with Irish Home Rule movement and activities of those Irishmen. Some Irish were elected as M. Ps to British Parliament. They tried all kinds of tactics of obstructions in British Parliament to achieve their aims. Some even came to physical blows and skirmishes. The British had started to say, “ Oh, give them Home Rule.” That was not out of love or affection, but out of utter despair. Therefore Congress leaders did not want to show any similarity between their own movement and that of the Irish. Otherwise they thought that the British will be angry with them and would not accede to our demands. And British sympathy was their trump card. Therefore Dadabhai did not support the demand for Home Rule by Shyamji.

Time seeks revenge

As discussed above, for various reasons, neither the Militants like Tilak nor the Moderates such as Dadabhai supported Shyamji’s demand for Home Rule for India in 1905. But the funny thing was that, just nine to ten years later, there was competition between Tilak and Dadabhai to demand ‘Home Rule’ for India. In 1915, Anne Bessant started her Home Rule movement and Dadabhai became its President, while the Nationalists also started Home Rule League* with Tilak as its President.

Thus, in a funny way, Time sought its revenge. If Shyamji had said, “ Others come around to my viewpoint some ten to fifteen years later. It will take them another ten to fifteen years to understand my policies of today. I pioneered the Home Rule movement in 1905, therefore Congress leaders now feel safe to demand the same today.” He would have been fully justified.

The programme of Passive Resistance put forward by Shyamji and Bipinbabu was taken up by Gandhi in 1920 and given the name of ‘Non violent non-cooperation’. Gandhi behaved as if he had thought of the programme himself. And he even promised Swaraj within one year.

Looking back, let us remember that those Indians who were tired of and fed up with the activities of the British Committee of the Indian National Congress and London Indian Society, now joined Shyamji’s Indian Home Rule Society and thus within a year those two societies faded away.

Barrister Sardarsingh Rana

One of the prominent members of Shyamji’s Home Rule society was Barrister Sardarsingh Rana. He was born in Kathiawad (Gujarat) in the family of a

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* It should be noted that in 1916 the British Administrators in India charged Tilak with sedition for his Home Rule Movement. In the Bombay High Court, Tilak’s lawyers successfully argued that Tilak had been pleading for progressive political rights for the

people and that in itself could never be seditious. Judges Batchelor and Shah agreed. It was a great victory for the Home Rule movement

Maharaja. In 1898, he came to London to become a Barrister. He wanted to take part in politics. So, he joined as a life member of London Indian Society. He also started to take part in the British Committee of Indian National congress. He became acquainted with Shyamji. Later, he started his business dealing with diamonds and precious stones in Paris. He used to look after his business and visit London from time to time. He became interested in Shyamji's Home Rule movement and accepted the position of its Vice Presidency and took part in the activities of the society.

In December 1905, his letter was published in *The Indian Sociologist*. He declared his intention to offer three scholarships of Rs 2,000 each on the same conditions as Shyamji. One was in the name of Maharana Pratap, one in the name of Shivaji, yet one more was in the name of a Muslim benefactor. In his letter he said, "For completing my studies in England some Indian friends had offered financial help. Now it is my turn to do the same for my other countrymen."

The Shivaji Scholarship of Rana was offered to me. I was recommended by Tilak, editor of the paper *Kesari* and Mr Paranjape, editor of the paper *Kal*. I was supported by the blessing and financial help of Maharaja of Javhar. This will be fully explained in the next part – My life in Poona/ Bombay.
[*Note – this part was never published as Savarkar passed away in 1966, few months after this book - Inside the enemy camp, was published in Marathi.*]
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End of Dadabhai's Parliamentary Front (1906)

Elections to the British Parliament were held in January 1906. As discussed before, Dadabhai had realised that not much could be achieved through British Parliament even as an M.P. Still at the age of 80 he again stood for election on ticket of the Liberal Party. There were many even among the Liberal voters who were saying that they should not vote for Dadabhai. They had enough nuisance from the Irish M. Ps and did not want to add to their woos by voting for a black man. Dadabhai was defeated. Indians in London had spent large amount of money and most had supported Dadabhai, irrespective of their personal opinions. It was astonishing that the Liberal party won the election. Mr Morley was elected; even Sir Henry Cotton got elected as an M.P (from Nottingham). The exception was that of Dadabhai.

Both factions of Indians in England felt sorry at the defeat of Dadabhai and expressed their feelings in public meetings. Shyamji however, was delighted. **He declared that it was not the question of an individual. It showed how the Indian leaders were misguided**. That was the main benefit. He wrote, " Recently, Indian hopeful candidates had spent at least 1.5 to 2 million rupees during last twenty years. What a waste! With the same amount of money hundreds of Indians could have been sent for further education in Europe and

America and would have received training in Scientific, Technical and Mechanical skills. Or the money could have been spent on some useful national purpose."

Morley becomes Secretary of State for India.

But despite the defeat of Dadabhai came a startling news that the New Liberal Government had appointed Mr Morley as Secretary of State for India. He considered himself to be a disciple of philosophers Spencer and Mill. He had written treaties on liberalism. He had condemned the repressive policies of the Conservative government. Indian leaders therefore forgot the sorrow of defeat of Dadabhai and held new hopes. They thought this was the opportunity of getting their aspirations fulfilled. They dreamed that Indians would be appointed to positions of high authority, injustices like the partition of Bengal will be removed. However, the militants kept on increasing their agitation. They were determined to continue with their activities of Swadeshi, Boycott of English goods, National education etc, until their demands were met. People were following the trio – Lal / Bal / Pal. Lal means Lala Lajpat Rai of Punjab, Bal means Bal Gangadhar Tilak of Maharashtra and Pal means Bipinchandra Pal of Bengal.

The revolutionaries were least worried and could not care less whether Morley came or went. They wanted to expand their organisation. In 1905-06 my secret revolutionary society *The Abhinav Bharat* spread quickly in Maharashtra and had branches even in Bengal and Punjab. Mr Arvind Ghosh and Barrister P. Mitra were its leaders. They ran papers like *Yugantar*. Work of Revolutionary organisation Anushilan Samiti is well known. These are briefly mentioned here as a background.

First annual meeting of Home Rule Society.

Shyamji, in his paper *Indian Sociologist* criticised the Indian Moderates for holding high hopes from Mr Morley becoming Secretary of State for India. The first annual meeting of their Home Rule Society was held on 24 February 1906. They said that it is absurd to say – good men like Mr Morley or bad men like Lord Curzon. The British rulers are all the same. They may come or go. We are not going to get Home Rule by making petitions to them but only by following a programme of Passive Resistance.

Surendranath Banerjee is arrested and fined. (1906)

It soon became apparent that the militants were fully justified in their criticism of the moderates. Very soon after Mr Morley assumed the office of Secretary of State for India, there was a spate of arrests in Bengal. Singing of *Vande Mataram* was banned. On 14 April 1906 Surendranath Banerjee led a huge public procession against that ban in Barisal (now in Bangladesh). He was arrested and

heavily fined. The meeting was dispersed brutally by the police. This incidence showed how justified was the criticism by the militants of the hopes of moderates. It was surprising that Banerjee was a Moderate and Loyal to British Crown. He said so openly on many occasions. He was elected a President of the Congress twice in the past. So, really the British Committee of the Congress should have arranged a protest meeting in London. But the Indian moderates still felt that since Mr Morley had become Secretary of State for India, Indians were bound to be appointed to high posts. Hence, even Dadabhai did not join in such a protest. He and others hoped that if any high posts were given to Indians they were bound to go to Loyal Moderate Indians and not to Militants like Tilak. With this hope the Moderates did not raise their voice against the arrest of Banerjee.

Shyamji's Home Rule Society, however organised a public protest meeting on 4 May 1906. Shyamji was in the chair. Most Indians attended. Among them were, Vitthalbhai Patel and Bhai Paramanand. Shyamji said that not only the British Committee did not organise such a protest meeting, but also even after invitation, Dadabhai and Gokhale were not present at this meeting.

First meeting of Indians in Paris: Beginning of India's role in International politics

On 5 May, in Paris, a similar protest meeting was organised by Barrister Rana and Mr Godrej. Many Indians attended and there were strong condemnations of the Police action in Barisal. This meeting was important. Until this time, the Congress Party used to look after politics in Britain. But they regarded the British Empire as 'their own empire'. They considered it disgraceful to raise voice against the British Raj, in Europe, which would be something un-becoming of 'Loyal' subjects. They felt that such actions would draw wrath of the British rulers. Therefore grievances of Indians against the British were never publicised in Europe. But the members of the Indian Home Rule movement in London had no such qualms. They were not controlled by Anglo-Indians and therefore established contacts with opponents of the British Raj and also with other European nations. They openly sided with the members of the Irish Home Rule movement and members of Social Democrats like Mr Hyndman. The protest meeting in Paris was a great step forward. Though it was held by the Home Rulers, Paris soon became a centre of propaganda of Indian revolutionaries for next ten to fifteen years. Persons like Barrister Rana, Shyamji, Madam Cama and Lala Hardayal worked from here. Only when the First World War broke out in 1914 and France and Britain became allies that the Indian revolutionaries had to move to Berlin. My connection with Paris will be dealt with later.

In those days most Indians staying in Paris were merchants. Among them those who were dealing with diamonds and precious stones were rich. They stood aloof from the politics of the Congress. However, as Barrister Rana and Madam Cama

became active in Paris, they enlightened the Indian merchants. I met Cama later in London. Let me introduce her.

Mrs Cama (Madam Bhikaji Rustum Cama) 1861-1937

This lady was born in a rich Parsee family in Bombay. She was married to a Parsee named Rustumji Cama who was a Barrister. Both her parents and in-laws were well-known and recognised by the authorities. Whenever the Governor of Bombay Province held any public functions Mr and Mrs Cama were invited as guests. They had children. But Mrs Cama was not happy with normal family life. She started to take part in public functions. When bubonic plague first spread in Bombay in 1896 it caused havoc, as it was contagious. If one person contacted plague, entire locality would be affected. There was no effective remedy known at that time. Anti-plague jabs were not yet invented. It was dangerous for Doctors, Nurses and Volunteers to handle patients suffering from plague. Despite such well-known dangers Madam Cama became a volunteer. She soon got infected and by grace of God, survived. But she became so weak that the doctors advised that she should convalesce in Europe. In the meantime she just could not get on with her husband and sought separation from him. Her financial position was sound and she set sail for Europe. She soon settled in Paris. She joined social and sports clubs. Soon she was acquainted with men and women of French high society. She used to dress attractively and the French appreciated her wearing of the Indian Saree. After a while, she recovered her health but her natural tendency was to remain active in public affairs.

As a Parsee, she was known to Dadabhai and, through him, got introduced to other Indian leaders in London. She worked in all the political movements of Dadabhai. But the arrogance of Lord Curzon and the unrest he created affected Cama also. She was transformed into a militant. When Shyamji started the Indian Home Rule society, Cama joined and supported it wholeheartedly. She was open-minded and would not hesitate to express her opinions. She delivered many public lectures and wrote many articles. She bluntly declared, “ We will snatch our independence from the British. Our revolution would be a peaceful one, not a bloody armed one.“ One has to accept that this is as far as her politics went.

Indian youth in Britain at that time.

Earlier, I had given my reason for coming to London, where selected youth from various provinces of India would come. They were intelligent, rich and well educated. They were hoping to achieve high posts in the ICS or IMS or become barristers. It was very easy to contact them. The meetings could be held frequently. I wanted to spread the fire of fight for freedom struggle among them and also draw them to the side of revolutionaries. At least, they could hold

sympathy for the revolutionaries. When they returned to India they would become Barristers, Doctors, Editors, Magistrates, Collectors and some may even become Military officers. If I drew them to my side, they would be useful in future freedom struggle. Let us see the mental attitude and character of Indian students in London at that time –

Invariably they were opposed to my efforts.

I do not know how many Indian students were there in Britain at that time, but it was probably 2,000. Ninety percent of them stood aloof from politics scrupulously. During their upbringing they had never received any lessons in patriotism nor were their aspirations raised any higher than serving the British Raj
(and becoming WOGs – Westernised Oriental Gentleman). Moreover they were scattered as per their location of colleges or convenience of residence. They were in groups of four to ten. There were fair number in Oxford, Cambridge, Manchester and Edinburgh, but majority were in London and its suburbs. There were no functions designed to bring them together and give them a kind of awakening, if not political at least social or cultural. Moreover, many came from rich families – Rajas and Maharajas, Landlords, Divans or Sirdars. They were brought up as English from childhood and taught to be loyal to the British Crown. Many were entrusted to white nannies since childhood and when they reached the age of fourteen they would be sent to schools like Harrow and kept in some English families during the period of their education. Those youth would even speak in English among themselves and would proudly say that they forgot their mother tongue – be it Bengali, Punjabi or any other. They tried to learn English music. They would join dancing clubs and would be happy if they got a chance to dance even with street girls. Many were married, but they were afraid that English men and women would laugh at marrying so young and therefore declared that they were not married.

They would try to outdo British youth in frivolity. They would wear expensive shoes and clothes to surpass rich British youth. They would wear new suits every day. Instead of staying in hostels, they would prefer to stay in some British families even though it was expensive. They got attracted to the system of 'paying guests.' This was nothing better than a roadside inn. In general, British families were reluctant to allow Indians to stay with them. However, some poor British families found it convenient to provide accommodation for Indian students. Later, they found that it was financially very rewarding to keep Indians as 'paying guests.' The reason was simple. Indian students were over the moon when they entered the house of a white family. They thought highly of the opportunity of sitting, drinking and dining with white families. So much so that they were prepared to pay high price for such a privilege. They would present expensive cigarettes and wines to their host families. Their only desire was that by so doing they should be accepted in the British society. But no matter what they did, they could not change their colour. Even if they wore top hats and tailcoats, they

would be despised as Blackie, Nigger or Native, whether in dancing floors, theatres or teashops. The pity was that they felt no shame and their self-respect would not be aroused.

I accept that the above description does not apply to every Indian student but to a particular class. I would have considered it inappropriate to mention the above behaviour, if only a few Indian students were behaving that way. But there was a class who were devoid of self-respect and acted frivolously. Their behaviour was based on accepting slavery and therefore despicable. They were ashamed of our culture, civilisation, customs and traditions and considered them useless. They were brought up that way by their parents. When they came to England, they were further mesmerised. They were impressed by English language, literature and English way of life. They considered the English as divine. Let us consider a specific case. The person is not a modern Hindu but a Muslim. His name is Sayyad Ahmad. He founded the Aligad Movement and asked Muslims to be slaves of the English forever. When he lived in England in late nineteenth century he wrote a letter to his friends describing life in England at that time. In a letter of 1869 he wrote –

"The English have reasons to believe that we in India are imbecile brutes. What I have seen and daily seeing is utterly beyond imagination of a native in India. All good things, spiritual and worldly which should be found in man have been bestowed by the Almighty on Europe and especially on the English."

(Ref -*Nehru's Autobiography* page 461).

Above letter of Sayyad Ahmad would suffice to show how mentally degenerated and devoid of any self-respect, Indians had become. I have already illustrated this point by quoting experiences of Indians from the early days of Dadabhai Naoroji till I reached London in 1906.

Gandhi came to London to study Law in 1888. His behaviour was no different to that described above. He too tried to use Top Hat, Tail Coat and expensive ties. Many other Indians have described their experiences in a similar manner.

Motilal Nehru, like father of Arvind Ghosh too, was impressed by the British Raj. He sent his son Jawaharlal to England in his young age, who stayed in English hostels and so anglicised he had become that after studying in Cambridge University and becoming a Barrister in 1912 he paid no attention to Indian Politics which was taking shape in Europe.

Anyone can verify my statements by referring to autobiographies of Gandhi, Nehru, Charudatta, and others.

When the British called Indians as Brutes, instead of becoming furious, Indians would react – "Oh yes sir. We are indeed so and that is why, by divine dispensation, the British Raj has been established over us." I was trying to sow

seeds of armed revolution to overthrow the British rule in India. The readers can imagine how difficult, well nigh impossible was my task.

I was determined.

I had not despaired. Our youth were not useless. They were after all our kith and kin. Their blood had not been boiling at the though of slavery, but we could not say that they had no blood. Many were brilliant scholars. Their personal (if not national) ambitions were high. They achieved excellent academic results in British Universities, much higher than British students. Some were even selected to ICS or IMS services. It is true that because of their upbringing they had developed slavish mentality. But the other reason was that no one had set them higher values - those of our society, our nation. No one had challenged them. No one had told them that the fight for freedom was far more satisfying and challenging. Nobody had taught them that it is a sin to live under slavery and it is our moral duty to overthrow the British Raj. Nobody had shown them the light.

One must remember that even persons like Dadabhai, Surendranath Banerjee, Bipinchandra Pal, Shyamji and Lala Lajpat Rai had not shown any interest in politics till late thirties of their life. Even then, they too believed that the British Raj was a ‘divine dispensation’. But in the course of time they changed. So, if we tried who knows that at least some of the Indian students, who are at present self- centred, and disinterested in politics, will turn to be revolutionaries!

Moreover these youth came from middle and rich classes and had the necessary resources. The whole of India looked to them for inspiration. If some of them could be persuaded to join our side, that was as good as hundred youth from poor families joining us. This was experience in practice. A Prince, a Collector could become our sympathetic member and help in many ways. For example, by providing finances, by providing ‘safe refuges’, by turning a blind eye to revolutionary activities, and in some cases, by even providing arms.

I have described the mental attitude of majority of Indian students in London. But I had to propagate my views among them too. We lacked revolvers and bombs – which could be purchased, but how could we buy young men to do our work? It was therefore necessary to try to persuade Indian youth to join our side.

Thirdly, just as the Indian students were devoid of self respect, I had met many priests and Gurus who were even more coward, more devoid of self respect, more selfish, and regarded the British King as reincarnation of Lord Vishnu!!
I had met many of them in India. If I could change their minds by arguing with them, why would I not succeed in London with a similar mission? As a doctor I knew the physical handicaps and also the remedies. I knew the arguments of those who were lethargic and also the answers to be given to them. I was therefore determined to try my persuasion in London.

Exception of ten percent.

I have described the majority of Indian students. But there were exceptions of those who were not carried away by British pomp and who were patriots with self-respect.

The youth from Indian rich class had become useless by their upbringing; the lower class was too weak politically. The exception was the middle class youth. They were to become our backbone. They were prepared to make any sacrifice needed. Those who had shone in the Indian freedom struggle right from 1857 to 1947 came from this section. There was political uprising and awakening in India since 1903 and during the national agitation during 1903 to 1906 it was the middle classes who took most action. They took part in activities such as Swadeshi and boycott of British goods. Such youth were patriots, militants but not revolutionaries. In England they showed restraint, did pay attention to their studies and were prepared to learn what improvements needed to be carried out in India. But they maintained their dignity and would not tolerate any insults to our nation.

It was therefore possible to sow seeds of armed revolution among this class. There were also some elderly men of the 'home rule movement' who proved to be sympathetic to our cause.

In short

So far I have reviewed how Indian politics developed since 1857. It is clear that before I reached London in July 1906, there were three main associations working. First two emphasised loyalty to the British Crown – namely British Committee of the Indian National Congress and Dadabhai's London Indian Society. The third one was Shyamji's Indian Home Rule Society. The aim of the last and that of Dadabhai was self rule under the British Empire (it was called by different names, self government, autonomy or home rule). Though there were some differences between them they did not advocate armed revolution to achieve their aims.

But they were not fanatical supporters of non-violence

It is true that neither Dadabhai nor Shyamji supported an armed revolution. Moderates thought that impracticable, while Shyamji thought it un-necessary. They all believed that Colonial Self Government could be achieved without resorting to an armed struggle. **But they never said that independence achieved with armed struggle was sinful. They never accepted the argument that it was immoral to raise arms against the British and that we should never resort to it, even if it meant that we would be slaves forever.** No 'Loyal' or anti-British Indian leader ever took such a stand. One may refer to thoughts of Moderate leaders like Phirozshah Mehta or Dinsha Wacha. Not only

that, in the annual sessions of the Congress, the Moderates had unanimously demanded that the Arms Act by which Indians were disarmed, should be repealed. This included all the Moderate leaders from Dadabhai, Sudendranath, Mehta to Gokhale. It had been their *unanimous* demand. Then what can be said of Militant leaders like Tilak and Shyamji who worshipped Lord Rama and Shivaji and revered freedom fighters like Mazzini!!

Militants did not support an armed revolution because they thought that our position was helpless, as we had no arms and therefore armed revolution was not feasible, not because it was immoral. Congress became fanatically obsessed with non-violence only some fifteen years later, in the days of Gandhi.* Before that they were not unduly concerned with non-violence.

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* One should remember that the same followers of Gandhi however, supported armed struggle of Africans in Rhodesia, which started in the late 1960s. Not one of the followers preached non-violence to the Africans.

Armed revolutionaries demanding complete independence did not exist.

When I reached London, the Indian political movement reached as far as demanding self-rule within the British Empire. But there was no party to demand 'Absolute Political Independence' and to achieve it with an armed struggle, as there was no other way. In India, the *Abhinav Bharat* had spread rapidly and extended even to Bengal. But it had no branches in England and America or any other foreign country. The reason being that work of *Abhinav Bharat* was in secret. It was still busy with its organisation and propagation and had not carried out any public act. Moreover, no preachers had reached those countries. Two youth who had taken oath of armed revolution had come to Britain and France about ten months before me. I met them afterwards. They were Mr P M Bapat and Mr Hemchandra Das. Bapat had not come to England to spread the revolutionary activities. Mr Das on the other hand was involved in the Maniktola Conspiracy movement in Bengal and had come to London with a specific intention of learning how to make bombs. Both soon joined my society the *Abhinav Bharat*.

Arvindbabu Ghose

Arvindbabu's rich brother was so impressed by the English that he wished to bring up his son as an Englishman since childhood. It was also the desire of many other Indians, for example Motilal Nehru. Thus, Arvindbabu was brought up in English atmosphere since childhood and went to London to study for the ICS examination. His elder brother was also in London. Having passed the examination however, Arvindbabu failed to pass horse-riding test (1891). His father and elder brother were very angry. But Arvindbabu was terribly upset and gave up any idea of service. It is said that he started a secret organisation called

Lotus and Sword. By sheer luck, Sayajirao, Maharaja of Baroda was in Europe at that time. He had heard about Arvindbabu and offered him a high post in his state. Arvindbabu accepted that offer and that was the end of his secret society.

Charuchandra Dutta.

From some recent articles, it seems that a revolutionary organisation was started in London some ten years before me. On 1 August 1952, the paper *Maratha* of Pune published some extracts from biography of late Mr Charuchandra Dutta. He was born in 1876. When he heard of the events of 1857 war, he felt that he too should try such an adventure. One Mr Vishwas, an adventurous Bengali had gone to Brazil and become a high-ranking officer in its army. Mr Dutta wanted to contact Mr Vishwas and then try an armed revolution in India. But he was young and had to study for the ICS examination at the insistence of his father.
He went to England for appearing in the examination in 1896. Even then, from London, he wanted to escape to Brazil. Unfortunately Mr Vishwas died in Brazil. Mr Dutta found that Military Colleges at Sandhurst and Woolwich forbade entry of Indians. So, he concentrated on his studies. But he was having dreams of an armed revolution and met Irish revolutionary Michael David, and Scottish leader Mr Hyndman. Both encouraged an armed revolution. But when he went to see Dadabhai, he advised not to follow disreputable people like David and Hyndman. When he went to see Dadabhai again with his revolutionary schemes, Dadabhai told him, “I have no time boys to waste. Go away.” Mr Dutta’s memoirs over next 20 lines do not make sense. The names, events and dates are incorrect. There seems to be only one sensible piece of information. In 1897, he read that the Chaphekar brothers had shot and killed Mr Rand and Lt Ayhurst. Inspired by this, five Indian youth and Mr Dutta took an oath, “We shall never rest till we have freed India from the thraldom of Britain.” But this was their first and last meeting. The six never met again. Mr Dutta was selected for the ICS and joined service in 1900. It is said that despite his high position, Mr Dutta took part in activities of Arvind Ghosh’s Yugantar movement. But all those activities took place in India, and therefore irrelevant for the purpose of this book. I just mention one mistake in Mr Dutta’s memoirs.

He writes, ”Little dynamic groups (of revolutionaries) were springing up all over the country, who made their own plans and carried them out. Their local leaders, men like Chindabaram of Tutikorin and Babu Khare of Nasik decided on their own lines of work. I remember that in 1908 an emissary of Babu Khare came to me in Ahmedabad and pressed me to supply them with a couple of revolvers from Calcutta. Vinayak Savarkar, a follower of Khare had promised to send them weapons from Europe, but had so far failed to do so. It may be mentioned here that Savarkar did send later on, some Browning Automatic Pistols. With one of them, Kanhere, a young Brahmin, shot Jackson, the District Magistrate of Nasik.”

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* Now, Chindabaram Pillai did not belong to a small group but to *The Abhinav Bharat*. At the time of Surat session of Congress (1907), he became a member of *Abhinav Bharat* and established its branch in Tutikorin.
* The name Babu Khare is wrong (it implies that he was a Bengali). It should be Babasaheb Khare.
* Thirdly, I was not a follower of Babasaheb Khare. Of course I would have gladly been his follower.

Here, despite going away from the main theme, I would like to mention how deep- rooted 'Loyalty to the British Crown' was ingrained in him. Khare was nearly 20 years older than me. When we met in Nasik I showed him some of my compositions. One of these stated that a thief who had entered in our house is being regarded as a King. Khare was a patriot, but 'Loyal'. He said, "Mr Savarkar, I agree with all that you have said, but I will not tolerate disloyalty to British King or Queen. Haven't you heard – *Na Vishnuhu Pritivipati.* How dare you say our Sovereign is a thief? You can say that the British bureaucrats are thieves, but the King is like the reincarnation of Lord Vishnu." I had met hundreds of such foolhardy people in India. So, I had to arrange a lecture under the chairmanship of Mr S M Paranjape (editor of paper *Kal*) to explain the meaning of the phrase – *Na Vishnuhu Prithivipati.* [Vishnu is the Lord of the world and king is considered as his incarnation]. Khare changed his mind after a lot of effort by me and especially by my elder brother. Later, he became a strong supporter of our movement. Though I cannot give details of his sufferings, as that would be out of place, I recommend readers to study biography of my elder brother Babarao by Mr D N Gokhale and Dr V M Bhat's book *Abhinav Bharat* (published in 1950).
I just mention that Khare suffered terribly at the hands of the British Administrators. He lost all his property and died of torture in prison. That was tragic indeed. But he faced death with dignity.

Finally. I state that before my arrival in London there was no trace of any revolutionary movement in England, even in secret.

Chapter three

Inside the enemy camp

Let us now turn to the British people with whom we had to fight a bloody war, in detail. I give the outline of the situation at that time.

In those days, the British public was firmly of the opinion that Britain must continue to rule over India. There were several reasons for this.

British people, from the Buckingham Palace to huts in villages, were aware of the enormous flow of wealth from India to Britain. Thousands of men were recruited into British Army, Navy and reserve forces. Workers in British factories knew that British Rule had forced India to become a supplier of raw materials and importer of British goods. The livelihood of these workers depended on this situation continuing. Apart from the farmers, workers and merchants, British administrators from Viceroy downwards got their salaries from the Indian exchequer and even after retirement their pensions were also paid in pounds by Indian treasury. Thus, continuing rule of the British over India was a question of daily bread for hundreds of thousands of men and women. Therefore they all supported the British Raj.

Peak of the British Empire.

British Empire reached its peak towards the end of 19^{th} century. No other empire in the history of mankind compared with the British Empire in the extent, wealth, discipline or control. *Sun does not set on the British Empire* – we may not like it but that was the reality. They had borrowed the phrase from the Spanish whom they defeated in 1588 in the days of Queen Elizabeth I. They ruled over the countries that the Caesar had not heard of. Enormous amount of wealth was flowing into London from all parts of the world. British Army had proved to be invincible on land. Britain was mistress of all the seas. It was said – Napoleon could do everything but cross the English Channel.
Britain had gone through the stages of amalgamation of its various sections (tribes) into becoming a powerful nation. There had been many wars between England, Scotland and Wales. There had been religious wars too. There were wars between feudal power and King’s power then, between feudal power and people’s power in Britain.

On the other hand, Germany, Russia and other European countries were going through those stages of formation of a nation. Britain had been far advanced and could concentrate on becoming a world Power. Every citizen of Britain was well aware of this status and they considered it essential to hold down India by force of arms to maintain that world power status.

There was one more cunning twist. British politicians wanted to brainwash its people into thinking that looting wealth from India was not a sin, but a duty. From school children to Parliament, they had been told that they were ruling India for its own benefit. They offered peace and stability to the millions affected by poverty and famine. Instead of saying that they had imposed their rule, they propagated the view that Indians have willingly invited the British to rule over them. If we read British papers or books on the subject, one would find this line of thinking clearly evident. The British people too were so carried away by this propaganda that they sincerely believed in it. If a Herbert Spencer or Hyndman were to expose the British exploitation of India, he would be regarded as an eccentric or despised as an anti-national.

What was worse was that every church, every missionary who set foot on Indian soil had been preaching that the British must rule India for the benefit of Indians themselves - material and spiritual. Those pagans who worship stones were sinners who must be taught the truth of the Bible and spread its message. Christianity must have a firm hold on India for the stability of the British Empire. There are plenty of extracts to support this, let just take two –

* When the East India Company got control of whole of India, Mr Maugles, one of its Directors gave evidence to House of Commons and explained the Company's policy of rule in India. He said, ".. Providence has entrusted the extensive empire of India to England in order that the banner of Christ should wave triumphant from one end of India to the other. Everyone must exert all his strength that there may be no idolatrousness on any account in continuing the grand work of making all India Christ."

* Now let us see what Reverend Kennedy said in 1856 –
".. Whatever misfortunes come on us, as long as our empire in India continued, our chief work is the propagation of Christianity in the land. Until Hindusthan from Cape Camorin to the Himalayas embraces the religion of Christ, we must use all power and all the authority in our hands until India becomes a magnificent nation, the bulwark of Christianity in the East."

Letters of Prof Maxmuller and Macaulay whom our people had regarded as liberals had the same dreams. This is evident from their letters recently published. For further details, readers should refer to my book *Indian War of Independence 1857* – chapter entitled Adding fuel to fire.

One must stress that the Christianity here was not the one of 'turning the other cheek, but the ' Christianity' to stabilise British power. When the British went around the world to conquer, they had Rifle in one hand and the Bible in the other. They knew from experience that a Hindu once forced to become a Christian, becomes lost to Hinduism forever. His progeny too automatically become Christian. They in turn became enemies of Hinduism and supporters of the British rule in India. They considered the British Raj as their own.

The position of the British people was like the drunken monkey. They would send its representatives to the House of Commons, only those who would keep a firm grip on British power in India. It was the British Parliament thus elected by British people who would be responsible for sending administrators to India from Viceroy to Collectors. These administrators (ruling class) were called – Anglo-Indians. They were not independent, but mere puppets of the British people. If any one of them had behaved in a way not liked by the British people, they would have insisted on sacking of such officers – even Viceroys. If need be, they would have even toppled their own government. When examples of repression, torture, and injustice in India were known, the British people showed no concern. They always honoured barbarians like Robert Clive, Dalhousie, Canning or Curzon. Thus, in reality, the British people and the Anglo-Indian ruling class in India were no different. Lord Curzon had declared on many occasions in 1904-05, "We will not relinquish our power to the last drop of our blood." And he dismissed the Queen's declaration of 1858, which the Congress leaders worshiped, as 'an impossible charter.' Though the words were spoken by Curzon, they reflected the thinking of the British people.
(Notes -
1 Times (of London) says on 18 February 1930, page xi, col A, "Up to 1909 or so there was no doubt what sort of Government India had….. Constitutionally speaking, the supreme power rested with the electors of this country, who made and unmade Ministries, and therefore called the Secretary of State for India and the whole Cabinet to account if unacceptable things were done in India." -
That is exactly what Savarkar was saying in 1906.

2 One should remember that statue of General Havelock, who was involved in barbaric suppression of Indians during the 1857-59 uprising in India, was erected in London, Trafalgar Square in 1861, by public subscription.

3.Savarkar's views were also fully justified by what happened at the time of Jalianwala Bagh massacre in 1919. Readers of *The Morning Post* (London) collected funds totalling £20,000 and honoured Brigadier General Dyer with a sword publicly!)

That was the stark reality of life, which was understood by the Indian revolutionaries. The reality was frightening. We were insignificant as compared to the mighty British Power. We were convinced that it was cowardice NOT to accept the facts. It was suicidal and self- deception to deny them. May be because the situation was so fearful, that Moderate leaders from Dadabhai to Gokhale had conveniently deluded themselves in the following terms –
"The British people are just and honourable. They do detest injustice and the suppression practised by the imperial administration and are therefore not responsible for the suppression in India. "

The Moderates therefore, attempted to convince the British people of the real situation in India. We have already seen how futile their efforts were.

For the purpose of this chapter, I need to add a few words. Though I have criticised the methods and efforts of the moderate leaders, as individuals, I held them with deep respect for their patriotism and service to our nation. Our criticism was of their ways and NOT of personalities. They however, always cursed the revolutionaries, but we never did the same to them.

The same comments apply to the activities and methods of Bipinchandra Pal and Shyamji who preached non-cooperation. It is true that they did not believe that the British People were innocent and just, and that something practical must be done which will force the British rulers to take note of demands of Indians. However, they insisted that the methods of resistance MUST be non-violent! They believed that the British people would not tolerate any use of force against un-armed protesters; they would not allow any illegitimate or unlawful means to be adopted against Indian agitators. Shyamji's writings fully support this belief of his. In other words, even the most militants depended on the British people being just and believing in rule of law!! It was still 'loyalty to the British' but in a different way.

In reality, the British rulers were never ashamed of or hesitant to or incapable of resorting to use of force. Their rule was based on the Bayonet. We revolutionaries were fully convinced of it. We supported all the efforts of the militants and had extremely friendly and warm relations with all the leaders (Moderates and Militants). We only criticised their false hopes. That is all.
We fully co-operated with the Militants in their activities such as Swadeshi and our relations were like those between Guru and Disciples.

Only the revolutionaries were aware of the military might of the British.

In the Indian politics of those days (i.e. 1906) there were two factions, the Moderates and the Militants. The first one wanted to appeal to the better nature of the British, while the second felt that Passive Resistance would achieve their aim. Neither party therefore was much concerned about the military strength of the British. Large volumes of lectures and articles by leaders from Dadabhai Naoroji to Bipin Chandra Pal are available. But, even for a curiosity, there is no mention of any doubt, ' what if, the British use their military might?' They were determined that there should be no secrecy in their movement. Military strength of the British was never considered a factor in their programme.

Revolutionaries, on the other hand, had to start with an armed struggle. Their leaders, if not each follower, had to consider the military strength of the British. They had no choice. They were not only aware of that strength; they were also concerned about it. Because it was they who were going to fall victims to the bullets and bayonets of the British. They were going to the gallows. It was their households, which were going to be utterly destroyed by the British. There was no way they could ignore or underestimate the military strength of the British.

The Moderates tried armchair politics and considered it to be appropriate and honourable. Militants went as far as Passive Resistance. Moderates and even some militants attacked the Revolutionaries in scathing terms. Their attacks were more acrimonious than attacks in the British Newspapers. In their public utterances and private conversations they said, ‘ How are these handful of youngsters going to achieve independence? They are fools. Do they have the faintest idea of how powerful the British are? Do they really think that the British will be scared with few sticks and revolvers and run away? If the British wish, they can blast off the whole country with guns.’
Referring to the revolutionaries openly they would say, “ You will totally ruin your lives, and you may even go to the gallows!! You consider us Moderates as mild. Just you wait. Once you are flogged, you will lick the boots of the English. If you really want to serve the country, follow our path.” The Moderates therefore said that we (the revolutionaries) should follow their suit.

Militants said that we (Indians) should practise non-violent non-cooperation. The British, the Moderates and even the Militant newspapers always cursed us and called us ‘ of perverted minds, murderers, terrorists, fanatics.’

But, these remarks merely proved that our critics were ignorant of the fact that the revolutionaries were NOT unaware of the might of the British. And who told them that the revolutionaries believed that the British could be driven out of India with a handful of revolvers? The funny thing was that if the English were capable of blasting off the whole country with guns, would they pay any attention to the prayers and petitions of the Moderates? Would they pack their guns and leave India by the mere declaration of non co-operation? One must therefore conclude that only the Revolutionaries were acutely aware of the British character and their formidable military strength.

“ Speaking for myself, I can vouch that I never dismissed strength of the British. Right from the start, whenever I administered the oath of Abhinav Bharat, I used to make the newcomers aware of what sacrifices they would have to make. ”
“ I made it clear to them that they would have to forego their houses, property, pleasures of life, reputation, affections of the beloved and even face death. From the days of Mitra Mela in Nasik (in India) to our weekly meetings in London, while discussing the histories of revolutionaries of many countries, I used to emphasise this point.”

Even before leaving for London, I preached to my friends, ‘Any nation who set out to establish a world empire needs certain qualities. The British do have the necessary attributes. Of course, they are brave. They are also cruel and deceptive. It is not for nothing that they have established an empire over us. I say to you, time and again, that their Military power is their Bible. And also no one can match their craftiness today. Therefore they are administering their rule over this huge country systematically like clockwork.’

‘ The trained officers who come from Britain (members of the elite Indian Civil Service) know every minute detail about us, our geography, our languages, castes, history and other characters. From the office of the Governor General’s Council to the office of the village chief they are functioning like a clock with eternal vigilance. First, they defeated us on the battlefields and the name of ‘Sahib’ has created fear in our hearts. And now they are ruling over us by their intellectual power through their specially trained staff (the Indian Civil Service) and Indian assistants as if it the whole thing is a perfectly working machine.’

For this important reason, the British people were least interested in how India was administered. All that they wanted to know was that it was being run firmly and without any risk. They were least interested in whether Indians faced injustice, or starvation. They were least bothered if the British administrators were harsh or liberal. They were more interested in cricket matches or industrial accidents than the annual sessions of the Indian National Congress or severe famines in India. If at all they were worried it was because of some revolutionary outbreak, be it by Phadake (1879) or Chaphekar (1897).

My records in London C.I.D

British authorities kept a close eye on the Indian revolutionaries. I can testify from my own experience.

I came to London in July 1906, but would not have believed that Bombay C.I.D would have sent a report about me, detailing all the political activities in which I had taken part. I learnt about it in 1910 when I was arrested and was being sent to India to stand for a trial. So it means that ever since I was 20 the British (in India and Britain) had started a secret file on me and had compiled reports of my activities (true or false). This went on till 1947 (when India became independent). In my active life, I had forgotten many details, but the British kept records of my activities. Their tenacity is worth praising. Some of the details were published in Government reports. These are now useful for writing my autobiography.

Report by Mr Montgomery, I.C.S.

Out of the secret files, the report by Mr Montgomery is now made known. It was prepared in 1906. He compiled it from information collected by officials in Nasik, Pune, Bombay and other places. He added his own remarks and the report was sent to Home Office in Bombay. This probably happened in March to May 1906 because it states “Mr Savarkar is studying for the L.LB examination at Bombay University.“ Just a few months after this report, I went to London, and I was introduced as a ‘revolutionary suspect’ to London C.I.D probably based on this

report. It is interesting to see what the British Authorities had recorded. I am quoting from papers that have now been made public.

Mr Montgomery says
"Mr V D Savarkar is from Nasik. He had been interested in public debates since childhood. He is hardly 22. But he has already grown into an accomplished orator of an enviable rank. He has been impressed by thoughts of Mr S M Paranjape. However, it is said that all that glitters is not gold. I think the same will be true in case of Savarkar. At present he is studying for L.LB degree in Bombay having obtained B.A degree from Fergusson College in Poona. The students of this college are generally dissatisfied with the current state of affairs."

"While in College, Savarkar had a group of his own that shows his attitude. Savarkar speaks very quickly. He is also very courageous. His speeches are very effective and as he gets response from the audience, he gets carried away and is not aware of the C.I.D officers that are present."

"His classmates are not devoted to him, because there is discrepancy between his preaching and his behaviour. He is very proud of his religion, but keeps hair on his head, wears shirt and a short coat."
"He sponsored Swadeshi while in College. On the day of Dasara, he organised a public bonfire of English clothes. For this behaviour he was fined but his friends made a collection for him. So much money was raised that after paying the fine large amount was left. This he donated to Paisa Fund of one Mr Kale. From this day, people started to look at him as a Martyr. Wrangler R P Paranjape (Principal of Fergusson College who fined Savarkar.) does not have much following. He is respected only among the social reformers. "

"Mr S M Paranjape supported Savarkar and through his paper KAL obtained public sympathy for Savarkar. His public life began at this stage. In my opinion, Savarkar is childish and is spoiling his career. He does not know what he is preaching. Not only that he is spoiling the lives of other students. He has contacts with 'Sanmitra Samaj' of Nasik. This society organised tours in support of Swadeshi."

"On 23 February 1906, Savarkar had organised and chaired a public meeting in Poona. Some students of Poona had gone to see Agamya Guru. This guru wished that students of Poona should start a society on lines of the one in Jabalpur and through it freedom movement of India should start. (Agamya Guru had started an Indo-European movement.) Students of Poona agreed to start such a society and asked the Guru for further guidance. He asked them to set up a committee of 'seven' and he would meet the 'selected seven'. "

"These students sent a telegram to Savarkar asking him to come to Poona. He did and met Agamya Guru. Afterwards he addressed the students as a chairman. He said, "My friends, the situation of our country is very bad. This puts a heavy

responsibility on our shoulders. Therefore we need to unite and form a society. It is not possible for the Guru to meet you individually and therefore I have come here.”

“Now let us start a committee of seven and then he will tell us what to do. So, you choose the members of this group of ‘seven’.”

“Afterwards, one Mr Pangarkar read a boring essay describing the importance of the society. In the end, Savarkar made a forceful and inspiring speech. This was like the speech of a general addressing his soldiers about to go into a battlefield. He spoke for 35 minutes and said, “My friends, it is futile to depend on the older generation. I have already told you how precarious our situation is. We cannot tolerate it any longer. It must be changed. People of older generation have no dynamism left. I do not think they will be able to do anything. “
“Those who have experience of the world need to teach the young.”

“Mazzini was old, his followers were young. He inspired his followers and induced them to become revolutionaries. He carried out his mission.”

“Old men have experience of life but the goddess of freedom needs fresh flowers. It does not like faded flowers, which have to be discarded. Therefore we must unite and be prepared for sacrificing our lives.“

‘What does the saint Ramdas say? – collect many people. Inspire them with thoughts. Then fall on …. I do not remember the last word.”

“ I can see secret police in front of me. I am glad that they have come. If they co-operate with us that will be great. We can achieve high goals.”

“We should always remember the teaching of Ramdas. We must obey his orders. We have lost everything. Continuing efforts is the only way. There is no point in crying for what we have lost but to regain our glory we need to sacrifice our blood. We have lost our Dharma (way of life) we need to re-establish it. etc”

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The above report is full of misinformation and just as in any secret police reports; it is full of false statements and inconsistent details. For example, it has been said that I had a separate group of mine own, but later on it says his fellow students did not have faith in him.

It has been said that I did not behave as I preached, because I kept hair on my head, used shirt and a short coat. If Mr Montgomery wishes to say that the ‘entire group of students did not follow me’ the same can also be said about any public figure. If the leader were a ‘reformer’ the conservatives would not have respect for him. But if Mr Montgomery wishes to imply that my contemporary students had no faith or affection for me, it is proved to be false by the first statement. –

Savarkar had his own group and because of their faith and love for him, other students and professors called it the 'Savarkar camp'. It is interesting to note that Mr Montgomery has declared me not having faith in our religion, because I wear a short coat. His definition of a 'religious person' is funny.

The report further says that as suggested by Agamya Guru, students had to chose their representative. A meeting of students was held, and though many were not in my group or even in my college, they chose me as their representative. They sent me a telegram and requested me to come to Poona and when I arrived in Poona, the students made me the chairman. Is this an indication that my contemporaries had no love for or faith in me? But such statements are made without any checks.

There are also many un-excusable loose ends. For example, someone reported – Sanmitra Samaj of Nasik conducted many tours in support of Swadeshi. Now, this society was in Poona and not in Nasik. It never conducted any tours for spread of Swadeshi. Their only programme was at the time of Ganesh festival and they organised a musical programme (Mela) once a year, and that used to be on a big scale. Their poems were very inspiring. But the society was not a political society in any sense. Moreover, I had no connection with it, even remotely.

The fact is that I was associated with the society – Mitramela. Its members did conduct tours in support of Swadeshi and took part in Ganesh festivals. The magistrate is confused between our Mitramela of Nasik and Sanmitra Samaj of Poona. And therefore he made up his statement. It is astonishing that the C.I.D of
Bombay province had no knowledge of our secret society Mitramela or Abhinav Bharat. They certainly had no detailed knowledge of either society.

Later, Mr Montgomery says – According to Savarkar, Mazzini was old but his followers were young. True, I had delivered many speeches on Mazzini and his association called *Young Italy*. Some were open, some in secret. But I always emphasised that Mazzini was young.

It is impossible that I would have made remarks about Mazzini being old. Either Mr Montgomery did not know of my lectures delivered in secret or had not read the biography of him. It is even possible that both were true. Perhaps he believed what he was told. When Mazzini was old, Italy was liberated and there was no need for his society to remain secret. Poor Mr Montgomery did not know this history.

Despite these drawbacks, the Bombay C.I.D have noted correctly two of my speeches and used them here. The police had noted how clever I was in ensuring that I do not get caught in breaking any law of sedition. In the above speech I had referred to saint Ramdas. His preaching was – Gather many people

together, get them induced to your cause and let us all make a determined attack on ….I pretended that I did not remember the word (foreigner). So I used the word – 'our calamities'. The audience appreciated my cleverness and applauded loudly.

Two more lines in the report are also an indication of my cleverness. I said, "I am aware that the secret police are present in the audience. I am glad that they are listening to my speeches. After all they are our brothers. They are bound to change and join us one day. " I said this openly but then added – "We have to regain what we have lost." To give a religious aspect to my speech I said, "But do we know what we have lost? We have lost our Dharma (way of life). I did not say – we have lost our freedom. Thus, though I was within the law, the audience got my message.

Mr Montgomery says – 'Savarkar gets so excited that he forgets that secret police are present at his public meetings.' Above explanation proves Mr Montgomery wrong.

I criticized the report not just for the discrepancies. Some 12 years later the same report was used to compile another comprehensive report, indicating how Indian revolutionaries carried out their activities and how they can be curbed. It was the Rowlatt Report.

Rowlatt Report

British administration in India had appointed Mr Rowlatt, a senior British judge to enquire into activities of Indian revolutionaries. The committee also included senior judges of Bombay and Madras high courts. It was named 'Sedition Committee' and worked 'in camera'. It examined all the reports of C.I.D officers and proceedings of court cases of Indian revolutionaries. The Government of India published its findings in 'Sedition Committee Report' towards the end of 1918. It ran into some 250 pages. Despite the fact that it contains mistakes and false statements, it still provides a thorough, detailed, chronological history of the Indian Revolutionaries from 1890 to 1918.

As for the mistakes, as the report is based on C.I.D reports of various officers, it has the same drawbacks. For example, it says about me on page 5 –
"Before leaving India, Vinayak Savarkar had been drawn into a movement initiated early in 1905 by a person styling himself as Shri Agamya Guru Paramahansa. As a part of this movement a number of students early in 1906 started in Poona a society which elected Vinayak Savatkar as their leader."

I have already explained how wrong it is to think that my political activities began after my meeting with Agamya Guru in 1905. I had started my secret society in 1899 and also I and my other members had carried out a lot of open and secret activities. These are not mentioned in Rowalatt Report at all.

Second mistake is to state that I was drawn to the movement of Agamya Guru.

Third mistake is to say that I started a branch of Agamya Guru's movement in Poona, as there was no such movement by Agamya Guru.

My public speech of 22 February 1906 was noted by Mr Montgomery. And he writes – 'The Mahatma Agamya Guru at this meeting advised the raising of funds.'
This is the fourth mistake because Guru did not attend the meeting at all.

Further information in the Rowlatt Report is even more absurd. It says –
"After Savarkar left India in June 1906, the Society (started by Agamya Guru in Poona) subsequently joined Abhinav Bharat Society, founded by Ganesha, Vinayak Savarkar's elder brother. At the time of his departure from India Vinayak Savarkar and his brother were the leaders of an association known as the Mitra Mela, started in around 1899, in connection with Ganapati Celebrations."

There are several serious mistakes in it –
* There was no movement by Agamya Guru.
* It did not have a branch in Poona.
* *Abhinav Bharat* was there from the start and was not started by my elder brother.
* Mitra Mela was not started for Ganapati celebrations.

Thus, the Rowlatt Report is full of mistakes and inaccuracies. After reading it, an uninformed reader or researcher would think that my political work started after I came in contact with Agamya Guru in February 1906 and that he was my first Political Guru, and that I joined his society. From then on and with his blessings I became a Revolutionary. Until then the organization called Mitra Mela was merely celebrating Ganapati Festivals!!

The story of Agamya Guru.

There is some element of truth even in the twisted facts. The same applies to Rowlatt Committee Report and the report of Mr. Montgomery. There was one Mahatma Shree Agamya Guru Paramhansa. He came to Poona in 1906. In the beginning he delivered lectures that would suit the Militants. He used to say, "Those who wish to carry out some patriotic work in an organized way, should see me." When one calls himself a Mahatma or a Swami, he invariably gathers some followers. He even talked like a Militant. So students started to go to him with expectations. Some members of *Abhinav Bharat* also joined them to see, if the person had some verifiable qualities. But the Guru always kept quiet about any political activities. He always insisted on the students to collect some funds, appoint a committee and send their leader to him. Then he would guide the

student’s leader. Having created a mystery around him, some students were carried away. They pleaded with my friends and asked them to send me a telegram, which they did. Accordingly I came from Bombay to Poona. Until that time, I had not heard of Agamya Guru. Students of schools and colleges decided to have a meeting. Accordingly a big gathering was arranged on 23 February 1906. I talked about organizing the youth for obtaining our freedom. This is the meeting Mr. Montgomery was referring to. Many students suggested that a committee should now be appointed. Accordingly seven members of a committee were selected with me as its leader. I then approached Agamya Guru with members of the committee and asked, “Can you now tell us what plans of action have you got?” But he did not respond properly. At times he spoke about Yoga and Pranayam (breathing exercises), at times he talked about God and religion. I interrupted and asked, “ Will you please talk about your programme of action and your guidance for us?”

The Guru said, “What guidance can I give to this group of students? What can you achieve? I told you to collect some funds. Even that you have not done. Go away and collect some money.” I realized the true worth of the Guru. Students dispersed. I asked my friends ‘why did you send me a telegram?’ There are many bogus Gurus. They tremble at the very thought of an armed revolution. I will never see this Agamya Guru again.”
I do not know what happened to him afterwards. I did not bother.

My contact with the Guru was very short. I would not have mentioned his name in my autobiography. But the Rowlatt Report and the report of Mr. Montgomery had made a mountain out of a mole. After serving eleven years in prison on the Andaman Islands and further three years in Indian jails, I was released in 1924 on the condition that I would live in Ratnagiri. It was at that time that I came across the Rowlatt Report and laughed at it for the above reason.
When I was interned in Ratnagiri, I met Dadarao Karandikar, a follower of Tilak. This is what he said about Agamya Guru. “I met Agamya Guru in London in 1908 and later he was sent to prison for trying to molest an English girl. “ This information is contained in Mr Karandikar’s book ‘Letters from England.’ He adds, ‘I met Agamya Guru after he had served his sentence and that was the end of it.’

Had the Guru not met me briefly, his name would have never been mentioned in the British Administration reports.
Other mistakes
Rowlatt report also contains some more blunders. On page 4 it has been said – “Another paper edited by Chitpawan Brahmins in Poona was the *Vihari*. Criminal proceedings were successfully taken against three successive editors for seditious articles, which appeared in it, in 1906/07/08 years.”

Now, the paper *Vihari* was published from Bombay not Poona. Its Manager Mr. Phatak was not a Poonaite. Its first editor, who became a member of Abhinav Bharat, was Mr. Chiplunakar. He too was not a Poonaite. I started to write

anonymously and that increased the circulation of the Paper. But I too was not a Poonaite. It is astonishing that Rowlatt Report does not know that I was anonymously running the paper. When I went to London, Mr. Phadake became editor of the paper. But he too was not a Poonaite. When he was convicted of sedition, Mr. Mandlik became the editor. But he too was not a Poonaite. When he too was convicted of sedition, the paper was closed. See what the Rowlatt Report has said. None of us was in any way connected with Poona. All that is true is that we were Chitpawan Brahmins. It is astonishing that the Rowlatt report did not know that Mr. Phadake and Mr. Mandlik were members of Abhinav Bharat.

Incredible work of Indian Revolutionaries.

From the above discussion, it will be clear that many activities of Indian revolutionaries were not known to the C.I.D. Many details have been wrongly reported or are false and twisted. There were organisations similar to *Abhinav Bharat*. But the information about them in Rowlatt report is sketchy, incomplete, false or twisted. This is astonishing as well as makes us proud of our revolutionary work. The main reason being that though the C.I.D had enormous resources and widespread organization, we surpassed them in our skills and carried out many missions successfully. This includes Khudiram Bose (1908), Madanlal Dhingra (1909), Kanhere (1910), Bhagatsingh (1931) right up to Udhamsingh (1940). Who would not be proud of our organizational skills?

Indian History should not be written based solely on British C.I.D reports.

I have discussed failings of C.I.D reports as far as details pertaining to me are concerned. The same remarks will apply to other C.I.D reports, which have not been seen by researchers. Therefore history of our revolutionary movement should not be based purely on these reports. Otherwise serious mistakes and blunders will be permanently made. Let me give an example.
Report about my activities was first made by Mr. Montgomery in 1906. In 1918, the Rowlatt Report copied it word for word. Unfortunately Mr. Yadnik, who wrote a biography of Shyamji in 1950 assumed the Rowlatt report as infallible and gave credit for my activities to Agamya Guru. It is clear how innocent writers can make such mistakes. And once they do, the mistakes become permanent. That is the danger. What applies to me personally also applies to the history of revolutionary movement as well.

However, it must be stressed that the C.I.D reports are an important but partial source of very important information. But they should not be treated as exclusive source of information. Many revolutionaries have written their biographies and histories of revolutionary movements in which they took part. These are available in Bengali, English, Hindi and other languages. For the validity of Rowlatt report we should study all these and then only accept what can be tallied.

Chapter four

Joseph Mazzini : Biography and Politics.

I spent about a week getting used to life in India House. Afterwards I asked the Manager, one Mr Mukherjee, “I understand that Mazzini’s autobiography and his articles are published. But I have not been able to read them. You know the main public libraries in London. Could you possibly borrow the works for me?”

“Mazzini’s autobiography?” said Mr. Mukherjee. He thought deeply and replied, “I think we do have such a book in our collection.“ He came back with a book. I was delighted. But it was only a book of 300 pages. How can Mazzini’s works be contained in such a small volume? I thought. I read the book thoroughly and noted that it was only Volume One. I showed that note to Mr. Mukherjee. He took me to the library in India House. He murmured – I try to tidy up, but the residents displace the books. He eventually found three volumes. I did not have all the six volumes, but I was very pleased with what I had. It was as if someone had found hidden treasure while excavating inside a house. I read the three volumes in a week and pressed Mr. Mukherjee for the remainder volumes. He was impressed with my sincerity and studious nature. He tried hard but was frustrated at not finding them in market. Some ten days later he came straight to my room and said, “Well Mr. Savarkar, here are the rest of the books.” I thanked him from the bottom of my heart and read the remaining volumes in no time.

Mazzini’s influence on Indian Politics.

Just eight to nine years before the 1857 war, Mazzini and Garibaldi were engaged in battles of their freedom struggle in 1848-49. Italian revolutionaries were defeated and had to go into exile. They sincerely believed that it was their duty to help other countries also, that were trying to regain their independence from occupying forces. They heard of the 1857 war in India against the East India Company. Despite the censorship, the news of the war was filtering through. Events of Kanpur, Kalpi and especially the fighting abilities of Tatya Tope, which appeared in French newspapers, impressed the Italian revolutionaries. They felt deep sympathy with Indians and Garibaldi even wanted to go to India and fight shoulder to shoulder with Tatya Tope. Unfortunately there were plans for one more uprising in Italy itself. He therefore abandoned that plan.

After the unsuccessful war of 1857-59, there was a period of lull in Indian politics. But the next generation of English educated Indians like Surendranath Banerjee had taken inspiration from Mazzini’s biography. Surendranath was forced to resign from the ICS and then decided to devote his life for the service of India. He was deeply impressed by the deeds of Mazzini. During 1875 to 1878 he delivered public speeches on the subject – Mazzini and his secret society *Young Italy*. By that time Italy had been freed from the yoke of Austrians just five years earlier. Surendranath inspired hundreds of Bengali youth in their twenties and

thirties. And there was a wave of forming ‘secret societies’ though not on the basis of Mazzini. Bipinchandra Pal was one of the youth. He was around thirty at that time and though he took no part in any political movement he had been a leader in the
Brahmosamaj. In his autobiography he wrote, “I was inspired by Surendranath’s speeches on Mazzini and was determined to take part in political movement to achieve our freedom. “

Secrecy for the sake of secrecy.

However, Surendrnath wrote in his autobiography,” I used to tell our youth that you become staunch patriots, devote your life for uplift of our motherland but avoid the revolutionary methods of Mazzini. Those methods were useful for Italy. But Hindusthan is not Italy. Mazzini’s tactics will be disastrous in our country. Our efforts must be legal, constitutional and absolutely peaceful.”
Bipinbabu also wrote that these were indeed the honest opinions of Surendranath. So what was the purpose of secret societies? For solving puzzles? Bipinbabu explains –

“Between 1875-1878 after Surendranath’s lecture on Mazzini’s Young Italy, young men (in Bengal) formed a number of secret societies, though without any revolutionary motive or plan of secret assassinations as the way to national emancipation. Surendranath was himself, I think, the president of quite a number of these secret societies. These societies had no plan or policy of political action to liberate their people from British yoke. They only gave a philip to patriotism. They never seriously meant to rise in revolt against the British. They practically did nothing and passed away like a fashion. (page 248) “

In the first part of my autobiography I reviewed the situation in Bengal and remarked that till 1895 there was no revolutionary movement there. Above information does not invalidate that statement. Of course one must say that the seeds that Surendranath had sowed did bear fruit some twenty-five years later. Though not intended by him, Bengal became a hot bed of fervent revolutionaries, which surpassed all the secret societies mentioned by Bipinbabu. But that was later on.

Having seen what effect Mazzini’s biography had on Surendranath Banerjee, Pal and others of Bengal, let us now see its effect in Punjab by examining life of Lala Lajpat Rai. We already saw how he did not take any interest in politics till he was in his late thirties. Shortly before the establishment of the Indian National Congress, Surendranath had started a *National League* in Bengal. In 1884, he went to Punjab to explain its work. He also spoke on Mazzini and his *Young Italy*. Lala Lajpat Rai attended that speech and he was deeply impressed by Mazzini’s life. He too became determined to liberate India from the yoke of the British. He says so in his autobiography. Later he studied Mazzini’s life in detail, and he

wrote a biography of Mazzini in Urdu to inspire the youth and to encourage them to start working on the lines of young Italians of the time of Mazzini and Garibaldi.

In Maharashtra, the revolutionary spirit was present ever since 1857, but people there learnt about Mazzini much later than Bengal. Anti-British revolutionary movement was already deeply rooted. Those feelings were not to be imported from outside. From the heroes of 1857 war, revolutionaries of Maharashtra to the members of Abhinav Bharat, our sources of inspiration were Shree Ram, Shree Krishna and Shivaji. The deeds of these national heroes were being taught with the hidden message of revolt. Despite Vasudev Balwant Phadake (1879-83) and Chaphekar (1897), Maharsahtra did no know much of Mazzini. A far as I can remember, first biography of Mazzini was written by one Mr. Ghanekar in 1900. Mr. S M Paranjape in his paper *Kal* also wrote histories of various freedom movements in modern Europe. He did write an article about *Young Italy* movement of Mazzini. I realized that works of Ghanekar and Paranjape would be useful in inspiring our youth and there was a strong parallel between situations in Italy and India. I had delivered several lectures on Mazzini. I had read a biography of Mazzini in English and had realized that Mazzini's autobiography and a collection of his articles, translated into English, were available. I was therefore very curious to read those and my desire was fulfilled when Mr. Mukherjee provided all the six parts I had asked for.

I decide to translate Mazzini's works into Marathi.

As I studied Mazzini's works I realized that the revolutionary tactics that I had preached to my friends, were remarkably similar to those proposed by Mazzini for Italian Revolutionaries.

Secret societies must work on two fronts: Propaganda and Action. Some work has to be done in secret and some in the open. It is impossible to regain independence without resorting to force of arms. However, it is also essential to carry out propaganda by peaceful means to prepare the masses for their part in the revolution. It is essential to join forces with the enemies of Britain in Asia and Europe and sympathetic elements in America. Guerrilla tactics must be used to attack British sources of power, its centres, its officers; individually and in groups, to induce Indians employed by British such as soldiers to rise in revolt, to rise whenever there was a war between Britain and other foreign power, to carry out revolutionary activities one after the other – that was my plan of action. And I used to argue my case in open but still keeping within the legal limits. I was surprised to find that Mazzini had followed the same path for liberation of his country. It bolstered my confidence hundred times.

I realized that if my friends and followers were to read Mazzini's articles that will increase their faith in our methods enormously. That was obvious. In 1906, I and my colleagues in Abhinav Bharat were hardly twenty to twenty two years of age. Our leaders, both Moderates and Militants dismissed our activities as 'childish'.

They were the leaders of our society at that time. But then Mazzini and his fellow revolutionaries were similarly ridiculed as ‘childish’ and ‘absurd’ by contemporary elders in Italian society in 1830s. Mazzini had replied to such ridicule in his articles. The funny thing was that in 1906 persons like Mazzini and Garibaldi were regarded as ‘great patriots’ by Indian leaders without realizing that in their days Mazzini and Garibaldi too were being branded as ‘foolhardy’ and ‘childish’. Mazzini’s articles were going to make firm our plans of action and induce faith among people of India in our methods. I was therefore determined to translate Mazzini’s thoughts in Marathi.

The method that I adopted

But if those revolutionary thoughts were to be widely read in Marathi, I had to do this within the framework of existing laws. There were only two ways in which this could be done. Either follow the path of Surendranath who had not published Mazzini’s biography or his articles, he merely delivered lectures. But even then at the end of his lectures he used to emphasise that though Mazzini’s armed revolution had proved to be successful in case of Italy, we Indians must never adopt those methods, as they would be ruinous to India.
But to say that, would have been disastrous. After all I wanted people of Maharashtra to study and follow the revolutionary path of Mazzini. That was the purpose of my book. Path of Surendranath was totally unsuitable for me.

Second path was to translate Mazzini’s autobiography and articles as they were and keep them in front of the readers. But I had to go one step forward. My book was not just worth reading as History, or just a readable work. I wanted to emphasise that people should follow Mazzini’s example. Otherwise ordinary people would not have got the message. I therefore decided to add a preface to show parallels between Italy and India, add some suggestive lines that the readers would be thrilled and inspired to carry out armed revolution in India also.

With this intention, as soon as I completed studying all the six parts I rapidly started to translate the works in Marathi. I had to write Newsletters for Kal and Vihari papers, conduct my propaganda and look after my correspondence.
Still within about two and half months I completed my translation, which ran into some 300 pages. I added a 25-page preface to it. On the front page I put up –
London, India House
Date 28 September 1906.

I completed the task of the translation, but publishing it was no easy task. I turned to my elder brother Babarao, in India. He always had to face more than half the burden of our activities but if any name was to be made and publicity was given I always benefited. Such was the division of responsibility and fame or credit. The police were already keeping a close watch on my elder brother Babarao. He received no support. Finally he approached Tilak who advised – Remember it is risky to publish such works and decide your line of action.

Babarao had difficulty in finding a printer. Finally members of *Abhinav Bharat* had some influence with Jagadahitechhu printers who agreed to print. Babarao wanted to sell copies of the book before the police woke up. Therefore an advertisement was put in papers promoting pre-publication sale. There was a queue of subscribers. He also wanted to show that *Abhinav Bharat* was not a revolutionary organization but a legal organization. He therefore had already published a series called – Laghu Abhinav Bharat Mala. It contained Sinhagadacha Powada, Baji Phabhu's Powada, (both composed by me), Afzalkhan's assassination Powada by Govind Kavi. (Powada means a Ballad) Another series was declared under the name Thorali Abhinav Bharat Mala and its first publication was my biography of Mazzini and his politics. The price of this 300-page book was kept at 1 ½ rupees. It was dedicated to Lokamanya Tilak, editor of *Kesari* and to Lokamanya Paranjape, editor of the paper *Kal*.

Rajamanya Vs Lokamanya

I need to explain the term Lokamanya. As I remember, it used to be customary to use the title *Rajmanya Rajashree* before surname to honour an elderly relative or a public figure. Mr. Paranjape had written a provocative article about it in *Kal*. One could not imagine what subjects he would choose to incite the public. He argued, " When we were independent and had our own kings it was indeed an honour to address some one as Rajamanya or Rajashree. But where is our kingdom today? We are all slaves of foreigners. It is therefore insulting to call some a Rajamanya or Rajashree. We should address each other as Deshbandhu (Patriot Brother). And when it comes to our leaders such as Tilak who bear the brunt of the rule of foreigners, we should call them Lokamanya – or people's leader. That would be most appropriate.

This suggestion of Mr Paranjape was so popular that overnight the youngsters dropped the initial words Ra Ra (Rajamanya Rajeshree) in their correspondence, in speeches and in articles. They used the title Deshbandhu before a person's name to address or mention him just as we use Shree before a person's surname today. Tilak became Lokamanya Tilak not only in Maharashtra but also all over India. That became his permanent title.

Why was the book dedicated to both?

I had decided to dedicate the book to Mr. Paranjape because I was drawn to Mazzini by the articles on him published in the paper *Kal*. Moreover he had become a source of inspiration among the revolutionaries. If we could increase his prestige, it would also increase ours. We held Tilak with deep respect; we had deep affection for Paranjape too. So we titled them both Lokamanya. I was going to dedicate my book to Paranjape for articles which appeared in *Kal* and the personal encouragement I received from him and he had already agreed to this. But we felt that first honour should go to Tilak. So, I wanted to dedicate the book to both. When my elder brother sought Tilak's advice on publishing the book he

said that it was risky to do so. I therefore was not sure if he would like the book to be dedicated to him. Would it not be a great hindrance to his activities?
If I was to dedicate to Paranjape alone some mischievous group would have commented, ‘Look. These revolutionaries do not have much respect for Tilak.’ In the end my elder brother Babarao approached Tilak who said, “You do what you like. I am not opposed to it.” The problem was then solved. I dedicated the book to Lokamanya Tilak of *Kesari* and to Lokamanya Paranjape of *Kal*.

I sent the manuscript in December 1906 and the book was published in June 1907. People were so anxious that the 2,000 copies were sold out within a month. Still the book was in demand. Many asked for their copies to be reserved when the second edition would be printed. It was a record in book selling. Many papers gave favourable comments. There were editorials in *Vihari* and *Kesari*. Article in *Kal* (see below) reflected public reaction closely. I therefore quote form it.

“Patriot Savarkar is well known to Marathi readers. His enthusiasm, fierce patriotism, superb articles and oratory have made him well known. Having passed his B.A examination from Bombay University he had recently left for England to study to become a Barrister.”

“ Though he has gone abroad, he has not forgotten his country, his people and his language for one moment. It is persons like him who should be going abroad. He was not impressed by the large buildings, big factories and enormous wealth of England, but he has been all the time thinking of uplifting our country from slavery and to progress it to the level of advanced countries. If we send more persons like him abroad our country will benefit, because like roots of a tree, they absorb what is beneficial to our country.”

“Savarkar has written this book in Marathi, while staying in London, heart of English language. This is probably the first literary work, which was written in London for the benefit of our people.”

“There is a wonderful conflux of three – Mazzini’s articles devoted to the goddess of freedom, its translation by Savarkar in the free atmosphere of England, and the anxious readers in Maharashtra. This is bound to relieve us from all the pain.”

“These articles by Mazzini are streams of nectar. Like the Mantras of Vedas, they have tremendous power. If recited many times in a systematic way, they can cure any serpent bite. ….. One cannot thank Mr. Savarkar enough for making these articles available. Those who can read must study such works of literature. Those who cannot read can still benefit, if someone reads it out for them. We believe that recitation of Bhagatwat Geeta every day gives us salvation. Mazzini’s articles also have similar powers.”

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I had already said that my preface was written to stay within the Law. So many things were implied, but still the readers got the message. I am aware that it will not have the same effect in today's circumstances. Here are those passages –

Mazzini asks, " Oh, priests, were you not born in our motherland? Did you not grow up here? So, how can you go to heaven when we are suffering from slavery? True religion is not in your camps but ours. If you want Religion to succeed join our fight. Religion and politics are intertwined and cannot be separated. If 20 million of our fellow countrymen arise to regain our freedom, they will defeat not only one Austria but three Austrias combined together."

Now, this is what Mazzini was sure of achieving with only 20 million of Italians. What would he have said if his people amounted to ten times that figure and the numerical strength of his Enemy remained the same? He would have achieved his freedom in no time.

Mazzini asks, " Italy is being ruled by Austria. 75,000 Austrian soldiers are controlling us. We have become a slave market. Whatever little princely states had remained have become puppets of Austrians. Italy has become a big prison guarded by Austrian soldiers. Our name has become extinct. We have no national flag. Do you think you will regain your freedom by begging? Austrians have enslaved us not for releasing us by mere petitions! "

Countries enslaved by foreigners resort to the begging bowl (asking for leniency from rulers etc). Italians were no exception, but they abandoned that path. Italy knew that hundreds of years of slavery and thousands of broken promises were the stark reality of life. 'Loyalty to foreign rule' would lead to nothing. There were revolutions happening in Poland and Spain. This had affected Italians. True, there are countries in the world, which do not take inspiration from events in neighbouring countries (such as bloodbaths to achieve their freedom). But Italy was not that thick.

Swadeshi movement began in earnest in Italy. Students boycotted Austrian Tobacco. They set up roadblocks. Anyone found to be smoking Austrian Tobacco was beaten up. This movement soon led to political movement. This had also happened during American war of Independence (1776-83). History repeats itself. Swadeshi implies putting a break on foreign exploitation of one's country. Ordinary people do not appreciate freedom struggle, but they do understand how foreign trade affects their livelihood. They therefore join in the Swadeshi movement. As soon as the interests of ruling foreign power are threatened they resort to suppression. Then ordinary people realize that it is not the boycott of foreign goods that is the issue. Those goods are inert. Therefore it is no use getting angry at those goods. Real anger should be aimed at the foreign power. It is not the Austrian Tobacco; it is the Austrian rulers that need to be driven out. It is not Tea; it is the English that need to be thrown out. Thus it is no use begging. In the end one has to resort to force of arms to achieve

independence. Though most people come to that conclusion they are not sure how that can be achieved.

Mazzini says, "There is no alternative but to resort to secret societies. If truth can be openly told, it would be a crime to resort to secret societies and secret plots, but where propagation of truth has been forbidden by a foreign ruling power, when the whole country is a vast prison, secret societies are sacrosanct. Nay, that is the only path left. It is our divine right to establish secret societies. When the time comes we will break open the prison doors and start breathing again. Most European nations had resorted to this method to achieve their independence. With secret societies people can be easily induced to fight for freedom, but the same is impossible through articles in newspapers or public speeches. Even if we use 'implied meaning' in our articles or preaching, people not being clever enough do not appreciate our stand. With secret societies, we can openly preach fighting for our freedom. Moreover, mere propaganda is not enough. Action plans are needed and obviously these cannot be discussed in the open." Therefore Mazzini started his secret society – *Young Italy*. They had twin programme of educating people, teaching them the need for liberation from slavery, unity, equality, principles of democracy, and teaching of military tactics, all these were taught.

Independence can never be won without a fight. But it had become impossible in Italy. Italians had no arms and were not allowed to hold any. Under these circumstances any other country would have been frightened, but not Italy. Her brave youth went to Spain, America, Germany and Poland and learned how to fight. Thus, Garibaldi, Vicioty and others became military experts. Their secret societies purchased arms and sent shipments of them. Sometimes these did come to light. For example, once Mazzini's French sympathizer loaded a ship full of arms. But it was caught on the high seas before it could reach the shores of Italy. **Such misfortunes are bound to occur in a great fight. Those who are scared of such events stay enslaved, but brave men face such disasters and win their independence.**

Another ploy employed by Italians was to bring Italian soldiers to their side. No foreign power can rule other country without the help of native soldiers. If these could be turned to the side of freedom fighters, it has two advantages – The foreign rulers lose faith in native soldiers and panic. Moreover, trained and armed soldiers become available for the freedom struggle. …. When this stage is reached, you resort to guerrilla tactics. Mazzini says – "for this action, the freedom fighters do not need sophisticated military training. Fighting can start when enough fighters are ready and determined. They learn by experience, as the war progresses. With guerrilla tactics, there is no danger of facing large-scale defeats. Guerrillas can also move freely."

With the establishment of secret societies there was always at least one rebellion every year, right from 1831 to 1870. Italians faced many defeats, but they kept on

fighting. Mazzini stated, “Every failure is one more step to success.” There was defeat in 1820, in 1831, in 1848 – every time Mazzini said – “try once more.“

In Rome, in 1848, Italians were fighting French soldiers. Garibaldi took part in the fight. Suddenly he was called by the War Council. When he arrived, he was given a standing ovation. He could not understand why. Then he looked at himself and realized that his clothes were torn by passing bullets or sword marks. His sword was so bent that he could not put it back in its sheath. We salute such sword. As long as there is one such sword in the world, enslaved people have hope of regaining their independence.

Later on, fighting ensued between France, Austria and Germany. France and Austria both enemies of Italians were facing life threatening crisis, Italy erupted in armed rebellion and in 1859 half of Italy was liberated. In 1866 Venice was liberated, in 1870 Rome was free and Mazzini entered the gates of Rome. Mazzini who was imprisoned in Savona in 1831 now entered Rome as Italy’s liberator. Can anyone draw these two pictures side by side?
Within a year Mazzini died. Thousands of Italians lined streets for last glimpse of their great hero. Many cried. **God has given a Mazzini to every country. Therefore no one should envy Italy.**

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These are extracts from my preface to Mazzini’s biography. Now I quote some of Mazzini’s thoughts expressed in his articles –
“ Youth of my country, love our motherland. This is the land of your forefathers and therefore your own land. This is the place where you first heard your mother’s lovely and caring voice. This is where you too first spoke your words. This land has been given to you by God. You should be proud of it. Devote everything you have even your blood for the motherland. Lead it to a better life. Make sure that you do not in any way demote it. Make sure that it becomes free. Our country must remain one. It must not be divided. God has given us the Alps on one side and the sea on the other to guard our land. Today it has been blotted with slavery. Let no one sleep in this state easily. Be determined to liberate our motherland.”

“You love mankind. Our country is your cradle and whole mankind is your mother. Other countries too are trying to free themselves of foreign rule. Help them as much as you can. Believe in Humanity. Make sacrifices for your aim in life. Don’t despair by hardships or misery. **Life is not for pleasure but for performing your duty**.”

“Once you are determined to uphold your freedom, dignity of your nation and of humanity, then you must fight for these values. You must fight incessantly and for all your life. You must fight with any arms you can get hold of. You must be prepared to face hatred and ridicule. You must consider all obstacles as minor. Don’t worry about any fruits your efforts may bear. Just do your duty.”

“Our first aim is to seek liberation from the yoke of Austria and France. Secondly we will seek to unite our country. At present it has been fragmented into many tiny states. We will not be able to maintain freedom if the fragments remain. Therefore we must seek unification of all Italy. Our third aim is Democracy. If any Prince is guaranteeing our freedom and unity, I will bow to him and abandon progress to democracy. I have said so publicly. Not only that I appeal that Democrats and Monarchists should unite first to liberate our country from the yoke of Austrians.”

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I had only translated those parts of Mazzini’s thoughts that would be useful to our readers in Bombay province. After all, I had limitations of size of my book (300 pages). However, I had translated one chapter fully. Mazzini’s secret society – Young Italy became known to authorities and was no longer a secret. This led to tremendous upheaval. Soldiers who had taken part in rebellions and members of Young Italy were arrested all over Italy. Many broke down under torture by the Police. Many committed suicide for fear of not withstanding physical torture and betraying their comrades. They considered death to be more honourable than betrayal of their comrades. Lives of hundreds of families were ruined. Many were hanged. Many were shot dead. Many went into exile – had little money or resources for survival. This applied to even Mazzini and Garibaldi.
I had described those terrible events in details. There was a purpose behind this.

By 1907/08, branches of *Abhinav Bharat* had spread to Marathawada on the east and Gwalior on the north. Many revolutionary groups were springing up all over the country. I used to stress to my members – “You are getting excited by the idea of achieving our freedom. But remember what lies ahead. We must be aware of terrible difficulties that lie in our way.” I had given them examples from revolutions in various countries. I knew that at one stage even Mazzini was on the point of becoming insane. He had confessed to this.

I, and many Indian revolutionaries often said -
We were of course aware of these dangers.
We have undertaken this duty not lightly or blindly.
We know that it is a fiery ordeal.
We have deliberately set up on this course.

Time and again I used to stress – “Before taking oath of Abhinav Bharat, understand what it implies. Become our member only if you have the courage to stand the dangers. Otherwise join the Militants or Moderates. They too are patriots at the lower stage of our struggle for freedom.”

My book was not a novel, but it was widely welcomed by the people. This shows how the background that we had prepared just a few years earlier had borne fruits. At times, the earth is parched and as soon as rains start, the earth absorbs all the water. In a similar manner the book was received by people of Bombay province. Copies were paraded through streets, as if it was a religious book. Secret police report says that each copy was read by twenty to twenty five youth. Many parents asked their children to learn by heart my Preface. Revolutionaries like Mr. Kelkar have testified to this.
Of course, this was not going to go unnoticed by the British Authorities. Before they decided to take action all the copies of the first edition were sold out. There was advertisement about the second edition in newspapers. The authorities suddenly decided to act. According to law, they had two options. They could prosecute the writer, publisher and printer for sedition and then confiscate the book. But then, they were not sure of success. I had taken extreme care not to be caught in any Law in India. I had simply translated Mazzini's biography and his thoughts. Nowhere did I preach rebellion against the British Rule in India. There was no mention of enslavement of India at all. So, the authorities were not sure that a case in court of Law would succeed. They therefore decided to proscribe the book. There was a notification in Government Gazette. Thus, I saved the publisher and printer from prosecution but not the book.

As soon as the order to proscribe the book was passed, there were searches everywhere. Houses, shops and persons were extensively searched. People too were determined to hide copies of the book. At times the papers published news of confiscation of copies by the police in such a tone as to ridicule their work.

In some cases, copies were hidden in the recesses of walls, which were bricked and plastered over. At times they were hidden in compartments in old wells. Police did find four to five hundred copies but the rest were preserved by the people for more than 40 years and they were secretly read. Later, as members of *Abhinav Bharat* were prosecuted, existence of this book was considered as evidence of the person being a revolutionary.

Many people agitated for the removal of ban on the book. They quoted from the book in open meetings and thus broke the law and went to jail for it. But the British did not lift the ban.

Some thirty years later we were granted Provincial Autonomy by Government of India Act 1935. Congress party formed ministries in seven major provinces. But even they did not lift ban on this book. For they too, like the British, did not want to support an armed revolution. So, the Congress Ministers were keen to maintain the ban. The astonishing fact was that many of these ministers and their followers were members of *Abhinav Bharat* and taken inspiration from our activities and had recited our poems. They also included followers of Mr M N Roy (a Humanist), Socialists and Communists. But apart from members of Hindu Mahasabha, others did not support lifting of the ban.

Time marched on. Forty years after the book was published, we once again had Congress Ministry in Bombay province, after the Second World War. Its Chief Minister was one Mr Balarao Kher, who was once a member of *Abhinav Bharat*. At long last, in 1946,he lifted the ban on the book. It was only then that it became possible to publish the second edition. But that was possible only because the public had preserved copies of the first edition defying the Government ban. I was lucky enough to preside over the publishing ceremony of the second edition.

MAZZINI, GARIBALDI, VICTOR EMMANUAL AND CAVOUR

As my book was on Mazzini, I had mentioned his work. However, there were three other personalities who must be mentioned. They too had influenced my thoughts. Mazzini was the philosopher warrior. Garibaldi was the general who fought the battles. But it was not just the revolutionaries who liberated Italy from the yoke of Austria and France. Almost all the princely states had accepted suzerainty of Austria. Only the tiny state of Piedmont was left free. Its position was similar to that of Nepal today. But its King Victor Emanuel dared to take on the role of leadership of the Italian revolutionaries, openly. It was agreed that whatever province was liberated by the revolutionaries, will become part of Piedmont State. For this adventure, he had to fight against the Austrians. Had he been defeated he would have lost even his tiny state. But he decided to wage his entire fortune, having had the ambition of becoming King of whole of Italy. In the end the tide turned in his favour and armies of France and Austria were driven out of Italy. And in Rome, Victor Emanuel was crowned 'King of Italy'. Though the King deserves full credit, his Prime Minister Count Cavour was equally responsible for the turn of events. He obtained sympathy of England and other European nations and also their help in secret. Moreover, he isolated Austria and France and got them engaged in other wars. His diplomacy too was an important factor in the victory of Italian revolutionaries.

Therefore we salute Mazzini, Garibaldi, Victor Emmanuel and Count Cavour as the heroes of Italian freedom struggle.

When I studied Mazzini's political thoughts, I also studied biographies of others and read extensively books on history of the Italian freedom struggle.
Travelin has written a biography of Garibaldi, I read biography of Cavour. An English lady had written a wonderful book entitled *Liberation of Italy* (I do not remember her name)

These four Italians had become the source of our inspiration, which infused in us the ability to fight, provided enthusiasm for a long struggle, efficiency and direction not only to us the revolutionaries, but also to the Indian leaders like Surendranath Banerjee and countless other educated Indians. I therefore pay my sincerest homage to their memory.

After Italy was liberated, an Englishman (possibly Meredith) composed a small poem to commemorate the victory. He says –

Italia, to vindicate thy name
Mazzini, Cavour, Garibaldi three.
Thy Soul, thy Brain, thy Sword, they set thy free
From ruinous discord with one lustrous aim!!
- May He bless Thee and them!!

Note –Mazzini lived in London (185 North Gower Street London N.W1) from 1837 to 1848 when he was in exile. In 1950, commemorative plaque was fixed on this house, by the Greater London Council (GLC) in his memory.

Chapter five

Establishment of Free India Society and writing of Indian War of Independence 1857.

Free India Society

Before leaving for London, I had outlined my possible work there. I had already started the secret society – *Abhinav Bharat*. In London I started organizing our youth, started to inspire them and convert them to the revolutionary path by individual dialogue. I delivered public speeches. I was busy with writing my books. I was in search of bombs and other explosives and also arranging training for how to use them. I started all such activities.

I started Free India Society for works, which could be carried out openly. We will deal with this society later in detail. One of the activities was 'weekly meetings' of Indians. I used to deliver at least one lecture at such meetings and talk about Mazzini – life and mission, heroes of the Indian War of independence 1857 and also discuss what we could do to free our country. While discussing Mazzini's life I used to emphasise, how he established his secret society – *Young Italy*, how he induced Italian soldiers employed by Austrian rulers to join in the freedom struggle, how he took help from people of various princely states in Italy to liberate the country. I would stress that we Indians also could do the same.

Many thought an armed revolution was impossible.

But most elderly and young men did not accept my thoughts, though based firmly on history. They argued, "How can you compare Italy with Hindusthan? Italy was one of the advanced countries of Europe. Winds of freedom were flowing through the rest of Europe, whose countries were free. The small princely states did have their own small armies, and the Italians did have arms like their rulers, Austria and France. The country was eager to gain independence. Therefore efforts of Mazzini, Garibaldi and others did succeed."

Later, those sceptical men would ask – "In contrast to Italy, where are the necessary arms for us to fight? How can we face the rifles and guns of the British? Indian soldiers under the command of the British are illiterate, mercenaries and loyal to the British. They would never rebel against the English. Moreover, the Indian masses are disarmed. So, how can we try an armed revolution in India? Your dream is a mirage. It will never become a reality."

These Indian students who attended our meetings in London were intelligent and selected few. Their line of thinking was the same as mentioned above. Of course, their questions and doubts were not new to me. Whenever I met young and old in India in Nasik, Pune, Bombay or other places, they had reacted in the same way

and told me that armed revolution was totally impracticable, impossible, laughable and even suicidal.

I replied firmly – “The arms being borne by Indian soldiers under the British command are our arms. True, our Indian soldiers are illiterate, but they too must have some desire to make our country independent. Spread the fire of movement for freedom among them and see how the same soldiers turn against the English with the same arms and ammunitions!”

The example of 1857

I was firm on my stand and wanted to write a detailed, fully supported by evidence and inspiring account of the 1857 war. As soon as I completed my works on Mazzini, I started to gather information. I was interested to know what the contemporary British personalities had recorded. Once again I approached Mr. Mukherjee who had helped me with works of Mazzini. I said to him, “ Can you please search for any books on the great revolt of 1857 in India? I will buy them if required. I intend to wrote a book on the subject.” He was an elderly and experienced man. He used to attend my lectures under the auspices of Free India Society. He had even taken the oath of *Abhinav Bharat*. After some thought he said, “I believe I have seen a book by Mr Kaye. It is probably in our library. I will find it in a day or two.” Accordingly he found the book and gave it to me. He had no idea what was in the book, as he had not read it. At that time, most Indians were ignorant of the fact that the armed revolution of 1857 was a great attempt by our soldiers to overthrow the English rule. On the contrary, many were under the impression that our soldiers made a great mistake by their uprising, they massacred innocent English women and children and they violated English women. They thought that the rebellious Indian soldiers were indeed brutes and a blot on our history, a disgrace to our culture. Their mutiny had harmed us considerably. The hard working and kindhearted English government was leading us to the path of progress. Now these stupid, ignorant, fanatical soldiers have created a great obstacle in our path. Therefore most educated Indians did not attach any importance to this great event.

Mr Mukherjee handed me the book *The History of the Indian Mutiny* by Sir John William Kaye and commented, ”what’s in that book? Why do you want to read it?” His question was true as far as the book that he gave me was concerned. When I read it I too thought, ‘is that all to that war? What am I going to write about it? There was no information of any great battles, no inspiring account of our heroes. It contained some details of rebellions for sons of Tipu Sultan and other minor skirmishes. There was brief mention of 1857 war, but no mention of Nanasaheb, Tatya Tope, Rani Laxmibai, Maulavi Ahmad Shah and others. I was utterly frustrated with the thought that the war might have been just a minor affair. At last I found an important note on the last page. It said – There are five more volumes of this, which includes the works of Mr Malleson and therefore the entire works are entitled *Indian Mutiny* by Kaye and Malleson. I was surprised and

showed that note to Mr Mukherjee and requested him, ‘Please obtain those volumes, even if you have to go to a thief’s market. You have been living here for some years and know a lot of people and markets. You are the only one who can help.’ He was touched and within a week he obtained all the six volumes for me. As I read them the whole picture unfolded in front of me. The battles were extensive; there were mentions of deeds of our heroes, Nanasaheb, Tatya Tope, Rani Laxmibai of Jhansi, MaulavI Ahmadshah, Veer Kuvarsingh of Bihar and others. I could imagine their bravery and audacity. Of course, since the volumes were written by English authors, Kaye and Malleson, they were not unbiased accounts. On the contrary, they cursed our heroes on every page, but even then it provided details of how extensive and widespread the revolt was. Moreover, it provided me with another important piece of information. There was an extensive bibliography at the end of the six volumes. From this, I gathered that there was huge literature on the subject. Once again I was determined to find it.

India Office Library and records*

I showed the bibliography to Mr. Mukherjee and said, “ I am deeply interested in studying all the books mentioned in the Bibliography. My research work will be completed only if I read all the relevant references. Can you show me a way forward?” He said that he would try. He made some enquiries and in just a few days told me –‘India Office’ which controls affairs of India from London has an excellent library. It contains extensive papers relating to the 1857 war and also has books published after the works of Kaye and Malleson. But entry is difficult. One needs references from well known persons.”

I was in a fix. It was nearly impossible to get references from Shyamji and other Indian leaders, because they too believed that the war of 1857 was a revolt of religiously fanatic and barbarian Indian soldiers and that it was a suicidal interruption. Moreover, Shyamji and others were seeking more power to Indian people and therefore not ‘Loyal’ subjects. So, references from them would be of no use. Once again I turned to Mr. Mukherjee. He had been living in London for a number of years, was married to an English woman and had a son by her. He was Indian, but his wife was white. He was working as Manager of India House and his wife was a teacher. He had English acquaintances. He obliged, went to India Office library, found out the rules and regulations, obtained the necessary references for me and I got my reader’s pass. I had warned Mr. Mukherjee not to speak about my real purpose in going to India Office library. With that precaution, I did not have much difficulty in getting my pass.

I was surprised by tenacity and discipline of the English.

As soon as I got letter of admission form India Office Library, I went there with Mr. Mukherjee. The librarian saw letter that I had received. I told the librarian that I wished to write a book on the events of 1857 and would therefore like to read relevant books. The librarian took to the area where the books on 1857 war and relevant files, properly indexed, were kept. I could not believe that all these

related to 1857. So, I asked the librarian, "Can you please show me only those parts which are related to 1857." He replied, "All this area is full of sins of the

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* This was located inside office of the Secretary of state for India, now Foreign and Commonwealth Office. It is now part of British Library on Euston Road, London N.W1

Indian sepoys." At heart, I was furious at this remark. But I was also assured that all the papers were relating to 1857. At one time I had difficulty in getting even one book on the subject and now I was surprised at the extensive information available. I was overwhelmed by excellent skills of collection and preservation of historical documents of the English Administrators. I talked to the librarian about seating arrangements and rules and regulations and left.

The librarian was outwitted.

The next day I reached the library at 11 o'clock. I browsed through the list of books and files. The librarian told me, which of those were of importance and asked me to read them first. I started my study in earnest. I was so engrossed that I neglected my legal studies for some time. The librarian was surprised by my studious nature and sincerity of my efforts. Whatever information I asked for he would provide. At times he would come to my desk and had discussions with me. He used to say how the Indian mutineers were disloyal sepoys. They were religious fanatics, barbarians and demons, how they mercilessly killed English women and children and created a reign of terror, bloodbath and loot and despite these deeds, they were finally defeated. He tried to create disgust and hatred in my mind about the brave soldiers, Princes and others who took part in fighting. He hoped that a young studious man like me would write a book on 1857, Indians would feel disgusted about those soldiers and their revolt. I used to listen to him quietly and never revealed my true intentions, because I wanted to gain his confidence and get as much information as possible. I got his full confidence, so much that he showed me many secret documents – discussions in British Parliament, secret letters sent by British Civil and Military officers, speeches by leaders of opposition leaders. These papers were not normally available to British readers. I was therefore able to judge what persons of various political persuasions thought of the war.

Of course, I could not find a single (so called) unbiased British writer, who would praise the efforts of Indian soldiers, who were fighting for their religion and country and wanted to overthrow a foreign rule. I found information on how and where the war was fought, how it spread, what were the reactions of British soldiers, citizens and public leaders.

I was convinced that in 1857, Indian soldiers, princes and general public of various provinces came together and fought a tenacious, pre-planned war to overthrow the rule of the (English) East India Company. It did not succeed, but gave a big jolt to the British Empire. It did not hinder our progress, but left a guide for similar action in future. That was the outline of my book.

I was banned from India Office Library.

On the one hand, I was studying in India Office Library and on the other; I was talking about the 1857 war in the secret meeting being held in India House. I used to explain the heroic deeds of our heroes of 1857 and induce the youth to try a similar uprising in future and be ready for self-sacrifice. I also used to write my book on 1857 war. In May 1908, I arranged celebration of the 50th anniversary of that war, in India House. That was reported in my newsletters published in contemporary paper *Kal*. British Secret Service had infiltrated our organisation and the Indian traitor must have told the authorities how explosive my book was going to be. He also smuggled parts of the manuscript of my book. The British Secret Service was alarmed and warned the Librarian at India Office Library that I should not be admitted to the library. He was stunned and informed me accordingly. Once again I was in a dilemma. I had nearly completed my book in Marathi and quoted references extensively. But I wanted to confirm some pieces of information. So, I entrusted this work to Mr V V S Iyer, who was my friend in confidence, He had taken the oath of *Abhinav Bharat* from me. He was not known to the British C I D and therefore could finish this task successfully.

The work was completed but…

Thus, I completed my work *Indian War of Independence 1857*. We spent thousands of rupees and sent copies to many countries. Many suffered for this adventure. Many editions were later published as below. The British Administration in India banned this book in 1909. The ban was lifted 37 years later when India achieved independence and the true story was told under the title – The story of the History. And was published by Mr. G M Joshi.

History of the book

Savarkar had started a paper called *Talwar* in Paris. In it he said, “The purpose behind writing this book is to narrate the true history of the 1857 war and inspire Indian youth to prepare for another similar war. Moreover, the history tells us how to organize the revolutionaries and to fight wars. We must prepare Indian soldiers to revolt against the British. This can only be done if patriotism and politics are induced among them. To the soldiers also the history of the uprising just 50 years ago would be inspiring. There was no other way to regain our freedom.”

The book was originally written in Marathi. Savarkar used to translate parts of the book for his lectures under the auspices of Free India Society. British C I D had infiltrated India House and their Indian agent stole two chapters of the book. Savarkar had to complete those again and send the whole manuscript with great care to his elder brother Babarao in India. But no printer would dare print it. One Mr Limaye of Solapur decided to take the risk. He was the editor of the weekly Swaraj. Police authorities in India heard about it. Mr Limaye was warned of

impending Police raid on his printing press. He hid the manuscript. Babarao then secretly sent it to Savarkar in Paris.

Attempts were made to print the book in Germany, as it was a seat of Sanskrit learning. But technical printing problems could not be overcome

English translation

Members of *Abhinav Bharat* in London decided to translate the book into English. This was done by Mr Koregavkar (who later turned government witness against Savarkar), Mr Phadake and Mr Kunte.

It was of course impossible to print the book in England, so attempts were made in France. But the French were afraid of Germans and would not support anti-British activity. (In 1904, the French had signed a Treaty of Friendship with Great Britain)* So, Savarkar's friends tried German printers. Surprisingly enough, they too declined. However, they introduced Savarkar to a Printer in Holland where it was eventually printed and published. Savarkar kept on saying that the book was being printed in France to hoodwink the British C I D.

The *Times* reported on 11 August 1909, " The mail from India brings the following notification issued at Simla on July 23 – ' In exercise of the power conferred by section 19 of the Sea Customs Act 1878 (viii of 1878) the Governor-General is pleased to prohibit the bringing by sea or land into British India of any copy of the book or pamphlet in Marathi on the subject of the **Indian Mutiny** by Vinayak Damodar Savarkar or any English translation or version of the same."

However, in England there was no ban on Savarkar's book, and The School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) and India Office Library (IOL) do hold copies of the first edition.

Copies of the book were available from Madam Cama at 25 Rue de Ponthieu, Champs Elysees, Paris. Price 10 Shillings.

Copies were also available from F.H Publication, 749 Third Avenue, New York. Price clothed $2, paper edition$1.50.

[Savarkar's book served as a source of inspiration to Indian revolutionaries for the next 38 years.]

Madame Cama published second edition of the book in France.

Gadr party, a revolutionary party in America published the third edition of the book. The party also published editions in Indian languages.

In India, Bhagatsingh published the fourth edition secretly.

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* Entente Cordiale – a friendship treaty between Britain and France was signed by British Foreign Secretary Lord Lansdowne and French Ambassador Paul Cambon in London on 8 April 1904. It ended centuries of military conflict between the two countries from Hastings to Agincourt, Trafalgar to Waterloo

Subhashchandra Bose published one edition in Japan and another edition in Tamil was published with his blessings.

Government of India Act 1935 granted Provincial Autonomy in India and Congress Ministries came to power in seven major provinces. But Congress leaders did not lift ban on this book, as they were obsessed with non-violence.

After the Second World War, Congress Ministries came to power again in seven major provinces of India. At long last, they yielded to popular demand and lifted ban on this book in 1946.

In 1947, while discussing Indian Independence Bill, Mr Attlee the British Prime Minister commented, " India is being granted independence because –
(1) Indian Army is no longer loyal to the British.
(2) Britain does not have enough army to hold down India by force.
Thus, Savarkar's aim of freeing India from the hands of the British was achieved.

Seventh edition in Marathi was published in 1946. It was a translation of the English version that was in circulation. Mr. Parchure published another Marathi edition, as the first one was sold out quickly.

Savarkar thought that the original Marathi manuscript must have been permanently lost. He had given it to Madame Cama in France for safekeeping. She kept it in a bank safe. However, during the First World War, it was lost. Madam Cama died in 1937. So, in January 1947 Savarkar wrote – the original Marathi manuscript has been lost. However, in November 1947 he received a letter from Ramlal Bajpayee in America. He said, "The manuscript is safe here with Dr D S Kutinho, your friend in London in 1908." In December 1947, he received similar letter from one Mr. Gohokar who was studying in Washington. On his return to India, Gohokar handed over the Marathi manuscript to Savarkar (February 1949).

But this is NOT the copy that was sent to the printers. This has notes like – 'references to be added here', 'I wish to say so and so here' etc. Two or three chapters were also missing. Eventually the missing chapters were translated

from English edition into Marathi and the Marathi edition was published by Mr Shankar Ramchandra (popularly called Mamarao) Date in 1965

After the lifting of ban on the book, Gujarati and Hindi translations were published. In 1967 another edition in Hindi and Malayalam was published.

Note – Who paid for the cost of publication of the English edition in Holland in 1909? In a public speech in Pune on 1 May 1938, Savarkar said that Dadasaheb Karandikar and Dadasaheb Khaparde, the lawyers working for Tilak had borne the cost. These two lawyers came to London for an appeal against Tilak's sentence of Transportation for six years.

Appendix A

Case of Mr. Chanderi Rao

(Note - Some light on how Savarkar carried out his work in London is thrown by the case of Chanderi Rao. The information has been taken from 'Source Material for a History of Freedom Movement in India' (collected from Bombay Government Records) Volume II 1885-1920.

Of course we need to treat evidence in such cases with caution. What is told in court of law is not the whole truth. The defendants draft their testimony because they wish their sentences to be reduced; sometimes they are forced to say certain things by the police)

C I D Report
(Ref – Bombay Secret Abstracts 1910 page 167, para 299)

Bombay 28 January 1910 – Collector of Customs wrote –

You will be interested to know that today we caught a revolutionary who had travelled on the ship *s.s Sydney*. His suitcase had a secret compartment. It contained a Browning Pistol, cartridges and copies of the book *Indian War of Independence*. On his back were leaflets of Bomb Manual, which were covered under his clothes. His shoes also carried some revolutionary leaflets.

The person arrested is Mr Rao and he was handed over to police authorities.

Bombay 28
Deputy Commissioner of Police wrote, "I produced the accused in front of officer Mr. Drekup. He was charged with bringing into India, without license one Pistol and fifty cartridges. I had produced as evidence, reports of Mr. Larimer of the Customs and officer Mr. Fawell, and the suitcase and revolutionary literature. The accused maintained that he was innocent, as he did not know what the suitcase contained. I then said to the Deputy Commissioner that the seditious

papers were tied to his back and receipt for the suitcase was also found on him. I stressed how serious the offence was and pleaded that he should be severely sentenced. He (Mr Drekup) then sentenced the accused to two years rigorous imprisonment and a fine of 500 Rupees or additional imprisonment of six months if the fine was not paid. This was the maximum permissible sentence. I then took the accused to Byculla Prison and told the Superintendent that, as further enquiries are due to be conducted, the prisoner should be kept in isolation."

Extracts from Chanderi Rao's statement.

"I was born in Erode village of Coimbatur district in 1877. My father was a landlord. He died in 1903. I was educated in Erode, Coimbatur, Trichanapalli and south Arcot. I could not pass the Matriculate examination. In 1896 I joined police force in Trichunapalli area. I also worked as jail superintendent in Insen Central Jail. I resigned and joined as a Plague Inspector in local council. I worked there till August 1909. My pay was Rs 125 plus Rs 25 house rent. I also used to get travelling expenses."

"I realized that someone who had passed English Sanitary Inspector's examination would be appointed to higher post with monthly salary from Rs 200 to 300. I therefore took six month's leave and went to England. I had saved some money during my three year's service. I borrowed Rs 1,000 from my friends, sold some of my wife's jewellery and arranged the finances. My wife used to live with me in Rangoon. I sent her and my son to her sister who used to live in Titiruvar. I was not a Nationalist and took no interest in politics. In Rangoon I was not a member of any political party."

"On 23 July 1909, I travelled by the route Rangoon-Madras-Bombay and then travelled by *s.s Ville de Kiotat* to Marseilles and then straight to London. I had not taken any letter of introduction for my stay in England."

"One Mr V V S Iyer used to come to my residence often and discuss politics. When the question of resigning from government service arose, both Mr Iyer and Mr Swami opposed such a move. They suggested that I would be more useful to Indian revolutionaries by staying in government service."

"I was present at the political meeting at 2 Sutherland Place (London W2). The subject was - how to smuggle arms and ammunitions into India and raise an armed revolt against the English. The speakers were M/s Iyer, Rajan, Madhavrao and Gyanchand Varma. There were only six people at the meeting, one was Mr Banerjee and the other Mr Ali who was married to an English woman and lives in Sinclair Gardens."

“Second meeting was held in the house of Nitinsen Dwarakadas of 128 Holland Park (London W11). The subjects discussed were – how to fight the British with arms, how to collect money, arms, ammunitions and send them to India. I was asked to speak. I said, ”public education is more important at this stage.” Nitinsen rose and said in Hindusthani that I spoke foolishly. I then sat down. He then suggested means of driving the British out of India. He is not a good speaker. One Satyanand Prasad used to attend and speak at such meetings.”

“Mr Savarkar was not well and was staying in a sanatorium. I met him afterwards.”

“I have no idea whether arms are smuggled into India. One man does not know what the other one is doing.”

“At that time both Mr Iyer and Savarkar used to live in 11 Upper Addison Gardens (London W14). After the second meeting, Mr Madhavrao took me there. I was forced to take the oath of *Abhinav Bharat*.* At first I refused, then they threatened me and said that one who did not listen to them has now been imprisoned in India. They were eager to enrol me, as I was in government service. They argued that in India people die of hunger, plague or other diseases. So they asked me - is it not worthwhile to die for one’s motherland? In the end I gave up. The oath was as follows –
I swear by almighty God, our beloved Bharatmata and my ancestors that our nation will not gain its rightful place in the world without us gaining full independence. Moreover, the independence is not going to be gained without the bloodshed and battles. I therefore declare that I will try my best to gain independence for my country without fearing for my life. I will stay true to this oath and should I betray it, may God strike me down.
Vande Mataram.”

“I took the oath at midnight. Mr Iyer said it first and then I repeated it.”

“I beg the police authorities not to divulge this information about the oath and take care that it is not disclosed to anyone else. Otherwise I fear that the revolutionaries will shoot me dead.”

“Mr Madhavrao then took me to Mr Iyer. There we met Mr Chattopadhya, Iyer, Banerjee and Mr Kunte – who comes from Gwalior, and gets money from the Maharaja there. Mr Iyer took me to the top floor. Now only two of us were left. He administered the oath to me. I had to take it with folded hands. If it is revealed that any un-authorised persons know about the oath, they change the words.”

“As far as I know, Savarkar and Iyer are in charge of the London operations. I had to pay a sovereign (a gold coin, not in use anymore) as my contribution. I came down stairs with Mr Iyer and met others. This happened in the month of December. On 3 January I left London. I was introduced to Mr Savarkar. He said,

“I am glad that you are in government service. We want persons like you.* When are you going back?” I gave him the date. I never saw him afterwards.”

“When I was in London, I was asked to undertake the task of killing Mr Morley. I refused. I said that I had no wish to get hanged. I was told that I had to do this

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* Oath of Abhinav Bharat – What Mr Rao says is not true. No one was forced to take the oath. On the contrary, there was high standard to meet before being considered to become a member of Abhinav Bharat.

* We did want our members to enter Government service.

deed, otherwise I would be killed. I said that even then I would not kill Mr. Morley. It is one thing to fight a duel with pistol or sword, it is quite another to stab some one in the back. Mr Iyer and Madhavrao both were inducing me to kill Mr. Morley. Madhavrao raised this question first. I was going to see Mr. Arnold and his secretary Mrs. White for some work. Mr Madhavrao said, “Why don’t you go to see Mr Morley? He lives somewhere in Hampton. Go and see him with a revolver.” I did not have a revolver, Mr Madhavrao did. It was similar to the one found in my case.”

“Mr Iyer then gave me a letter for Mr Tirumal Acharya in Paris. I had no idea what was in that letter. He told me that I will have to carry a suitcase with 25 pistols in a secret compartment. This was because I refused to kill Mr. Morley. On the day of my departure I left from 2 Sutherland Place. That is where Mr Iyer gave me the letter for Mr Acharya.”

“From the discussions I had with Mr Iyer and Mr Madhavrao, it is quite clear that they want to kill Lord Morley and Lord Curzon. These two had been on the hit list when Dhingra killed Sir Curzon Wyllie. But at that time I was not in England. I was however told in a discussion - Lord Curzon was present at a public function attended by Dhingra whose friend pointed out to Curzon. But Dhingra could not see Curzon. I do not know who Dhingra’s friend was. I also heard in London that there was a plot to kill two judges of Bombay. One being Mr Chandavarkar and the other one was the judge (Davar) who sentenced Tilak to Transportation. I do not know what happened to that plan. One more judge was on the hit list, the one who sentenced Chindabaram Pillai.”

“For the next two to three years, *Abhinav Bharat* is going to carry out a campaign of political assassinations till total revolution is achieved in India. People are going to become seditious. High officials both civilian and in Police are going to be targeted. This will lead to general uprising. Arms will be supplied to those who will take part.”

“On 4 January, I reached Paris and met Tirumal Acharya. He used to stay with a Gujarati named Govind Amin in 75 Faborg Du Temple. I stayed with them.”

“On 8 January, I went to the house of Shyamji Krishnavarma. We took tea. Rana, Madame Cama, Hardayal were not present. Nitinsen was there. Shyamji requested that myself, Savarkar, Govind Amin and Satyaprasad should have dinner with him. He also said that he had promised to send 100 pistols to India and I should take 25 with me without asking any questions.* I said that it was risky. Govind Amin said that the pistols will be properly concealed so that no one will suspect. Then I agreed. I complained to Savarkar that this was a risky venture, but in the end I agreed to carry his books and pamphlets with me. Govind Amin requested me to carry one revolver for him. He said that he is going to carry revolvers to India. On 9th I was taken to the house of Madam Cama and I was forced to take oath again. Savarkar was alone with me, when I took the oath.”

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* Shyamji never made such requests to any one.

“We went downstairs. Govind Amin, Turimal Acharya, Satyanada Prasad and others were present. We took tea. I met one Mr Varma there. He is tall, slim, of fair complexion and wore glasses. I do not know his initials. They could be G.K. He had come to Paris to learn how to make bombs. I gave money for purchasing my case (trunk), that date appears on the receipt. Govind Amin took me to the shop. It was he who made all the arrangements. Cost of my case was 25 Franks. In addition, I had to pay 5 Franks extra for modifications.”

“Govind Amin came to me with the case. He told what was in the secret compartment. It was probably filled in the house of Rana because the books on 1857 war are kept in that house. I was never allowed in the house of Rana, but Tirumal Acharya and Rana’s son used to come and go. Most of the time, it was these two who sent books and leaflets by post. Savarkar and others told me that I should send a telegram to Rana, once I reached India safely. I was also entrusted to make observations and tell them, if any events have taken place that would lead to their arrest if they were to return to India. They all want to return within the next two to three months.”

Appendix B

Extracts from judgment of Nasik Conspiracy Trial

The judge says about Savarkar's activities in Europe – Let us now consider the evidence in front of us. We have testimony of the cook who worked in India House during May 1908 and February 1909,* testimony of an Engineering student* who knew Savarkar since October 1906, testimony of Mr Rao who knew Savarkar towards the end of 1909, letters which Savarkar wrote to his friends in India, the publications which were found with him and his associates.

We found no reason to disbelieve these pieces of evidence. It amply proves that Savarkar was the leader of revolutionaries in India House. He wrote history of Indian Mutiny, which he calls War of Independence, in Marathi. It was translated into English by his colleagues in India House. He publicly celebrated anniversary of the mutiny in 1907 and 1908. He produced and circulated the leaflet - Oh Martyrs, glorifying the rebels of the Indian Mutiny. He did not stop at mere speeches and writings. He prepared Bomb manual and distributed its copies and he was in the process of doing the same. Many had reached parts of India. Two of the witnesses were given the oath of *Abhinav Bharat* and he told them that it has branches all over the world.

…Let us now turn to other piece of evidence. When Savarkar was arrested at London (Victoria) station on 13 March 1910, copies of the leaflet – Choose Oh Indian Princes – inciting the Princes to help the revolutionaries in overthrowing of British Raj, were found in his trunk.

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* The cook was Chaturbhuj Amin
* The student was Harishandra Koregavkar

Appendix C - Explanations

Chapter One

Name/ Word	Explanation
Rameshchandra Dutta	Former ICS officer. Joined ICS 1868. President of Indian National Congress 1899.
Surendranath Banerjee	Moderate Indian Leader from Bengal (1848-1925)
Abhinav Bharat	Secret Revolutionary society started by Savarkar in 1900.
ICS	Indian Civil Service, a career civil service in India for young Britons. The recruits came predominantly from Oxford and Cambridge. Starting salary for new entrants was Rupees 4,800 per month (£3,840 per year – Salary of British cabinet ministers was £5,000 per year) in 1910 Indians were allowed to join in later years. The examinations were conducted in England only, thus making it difficult for Indians to compete.
Mazzini	(1805-1872). Italian freedom fighter who liberated Italy from rule of Austrians by 1870.
Tilak	(1856-1920). Militant Indian leader from Poona. He was aptly called *Father of the Indian Unrest.*
Lala Lajpat Rai	(1865-1928). Militant Indian leader from Punjab.
Bande Mataram	India’s national anthem. Original words are Vande Mataram, in Sanskrit. In Bengal, V is pronounced as B, thus Vasu is pronounced as Basu. Similarly ‘Vande Mataram’ became ‘Bande Mataram’.
IMS	Indian Medical Service. Indians were allowed in this service since the beginning.
Hindusthan	This is the proper name of India. Even when the East India Company was growing in power, maps were published in London in 1808 clearly marking India as Hindoosthan, with the western boundary with Iran.

Chapter two

Name/ Word	Explanation
Shyamji Krishnavarma	(1857-1930). A Sanskrit scholar and Barrister.
Dadabhai Naoroji	Moderate Indian leader (1825-1917). One of the founders of Indian National Congress in 1885
Motilal Nehru	(1861-1931) Moderate Indian leader from Prayag. Father of Jawaharlal Nehru, India’s first Prime Minister.

Name/ Word	Explanation
John Bull	(1562- 1628) He composed God Save the Queen in the reign of Elizabeth I of England. During the British rule in India, the term 'John Bull' was used to note a typical English gentleman.
Sir Wedderburn	(1838-1918) Former ICS officer. President of Indian National Congress 1889 and 1910.
Geeta (or Bhagawat Geeta)	In the Epic Maharabharat, Lord Krishna preached philosophy of life to his disciple Arjuna on the battlefield at Kurukshetra near Delhi. That is known as Geeta. It is interesting to note that Warren Hastings, the first Governor General of the East India Company was impressed with the philosophy of Geeta. In 1785 he got it translated into English.
Queen's declaration of 1858	After the eruption of the 1857 war in India against the rule of East India Company, British crown took over administration of India from the hands of the Company. Queen Victoria also made a public declaration to pacify the public opinion in India.
Lord Salisbury	(1830 -1903) Conservative British Prime Minister 1885-92 and 1895-1902.
Gladstone	(1809-98) Liberal British Prime Minister 1868-74 also 1880-05, 1886 and 1892-04. He advocated Irish Home Rule but could not carry it through parliament.
1857 war	Indian War of Independence against the rule of (English) East India Company.
Sir Hume	(1829-1912). Former ICS officer. Rose to Secretary to Government of India, retired 1882
Gokhale	(1866-1915). Moderate Indian leader. President of the Indian National Congress in 1905.
Mr. Hyndman	Scottish socialist. One of the few sympathisers of Indian freedom movement.
Prof Maxmuller	(1823 – 1900) German born Sanskrit scholar at All Saints College, Oxford. Joined 1847, Professor since 1854
Herbert Spencer	(1820-1903), an English philosopher
Sir Henry Cotton	Former ICS officer, one of the founders of Indian National Congress in 1885
Sir A O Hume	(1829-1912). Former ICS officer. Rose to Secretary to Government of India, retired 1882.
Bipinchandra Pal	(1859-1932). Militant Indian leader from Bengal.
Mr. Morley	(1838-1923) Secretary of State for India during 1906-11
Swadeshi	Movement to support indigenous industries in India.

Name/ Word	Explanation
Lord Curzon	(1859-1925) Viceroy of India 1898-1905. He partitioned Bengal in 1905, which caused huge resentment in India.
Vittahalbhai Patel	Veteran Congress Leader. He became Speaker of Central Legislative Assembly in Delhi in1925. Elder brother of famous Congress leader Sardar Patel
Bhavanagri Mancharji	An Indian Parsee living in London. Once a Conservative M P. in British Parliament.
Parnell Charles Stewart	(1846-91) Irish national leader. Elected as an M.P to British Parliament. He used tactics of obstruction in Parliament to draw attention to Ireland's problems.
Gandhi	(1869 -1948) He later became known as Mahatma Gandhi.

Chapter three

Name/ word	Explanation
East India Company	This company was started in London in 1600 and was given Royal Charter by Queen Elizabeth I for trading in India. It raised an army to protect its interests and got foothold in Bengal in 1757. Over the next 100 years it got control over the rest of India. There was a Great Revolt against its rule in 1857. Thereupon British Crown took over the administration of India from the Company.
Macaulay	(1800-59) Education Member of Governor-General's council in Calcutta. He introduced education in English medium in India.
Jalianwala Bagh Massacre	In Amritsar, Punjab, in April 1919 Brigadier General Dyer ordered his troops to open fire on a crowd of unarmed men, women and children. Some 400 people died and many were wounded. This turned many Moderates permanently against the British. Nobel Prize winner Tagore returned his knighthood in protest. In 1940, Udhamsingh came to London and avenged this massacre by shooting dead Sir Michel O'Dwyer the Governor of Punjab at the time of the massacre.
Phadake Vasudev Balwant	Indian revolutionary. He rose against the British in 1879, was caught and sent to Transportation for Life in Aden. Died in prison in 1883
Ramdas	17^{th} century Maratha saint.
Rowlatt	British Judge. Appointed to Governor General's council in 1918. Infamous for his Rowlatt Act, which caused great resentment in India

Chapter four

Name/word	Explanation
Garibaldi	(1807-1882). Italian soldier who along with Mazzini fought for Italian independence from Austria and created united Italy in 1870.
Tatya Tope	One of the Indian heroes on 1857 war in India
Shree Ram/ Shree Krishna	Two famous deities of Hindu Dharma. They are revered throughout India by people of all sects.
Shivaji	(1630-1680) Great Maratha King who overthrew the rule of Muslims in Maharashtra and challenged the Mighty Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb.
S M Paranjape	Shivaram Mahadev Paranjape. Famous editor of the Marathi paper *Kal* published from Poona. He was extremely clever in his writings, which created anti-British feeling among readers, but sedition could not be proved.

Chapter five

Name/word	Explanation
Nanasaheb / Tatya Tope / Rani Laxmibai / Maulavi Ahmadshah / Kuvarsingh	Indian heroes of the 1857 war in India.
India Office	After the war of 1857, British Crown took over administration of India from the East India Company. The post of Secretary of State for India was created in the British cabinet. His office (now Foreign and Commonwealth Office) was called India Office
India Office Library (I.O.L)	After 1857, all records of the East India Company were transferred to India Office Library and Records. Also by various Press Acts Indian publishers were obliged to send one copy of their publications to IOL. The library and records moved to 197 Blackfriars Road, London S.E 1 in 1967-68. It has now become a part of the British Library. In 1998, it was moved to its new location at 96 Euston Road, London N.W 1 near St Pancras railway station.
Sepoy	Soldier